

The Boys' BOOK of BATTLES



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM FAMOUS PAINTINGS

Send to R.R. L. 9/19/30

REFERENCE LIBRARY OF
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
2 PARK STREET, BOSTON



NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THE SHELVES
EXCEPT BY PERMISSION OF
THE LIBRARIAN

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO.



TRADE

REFERENCE

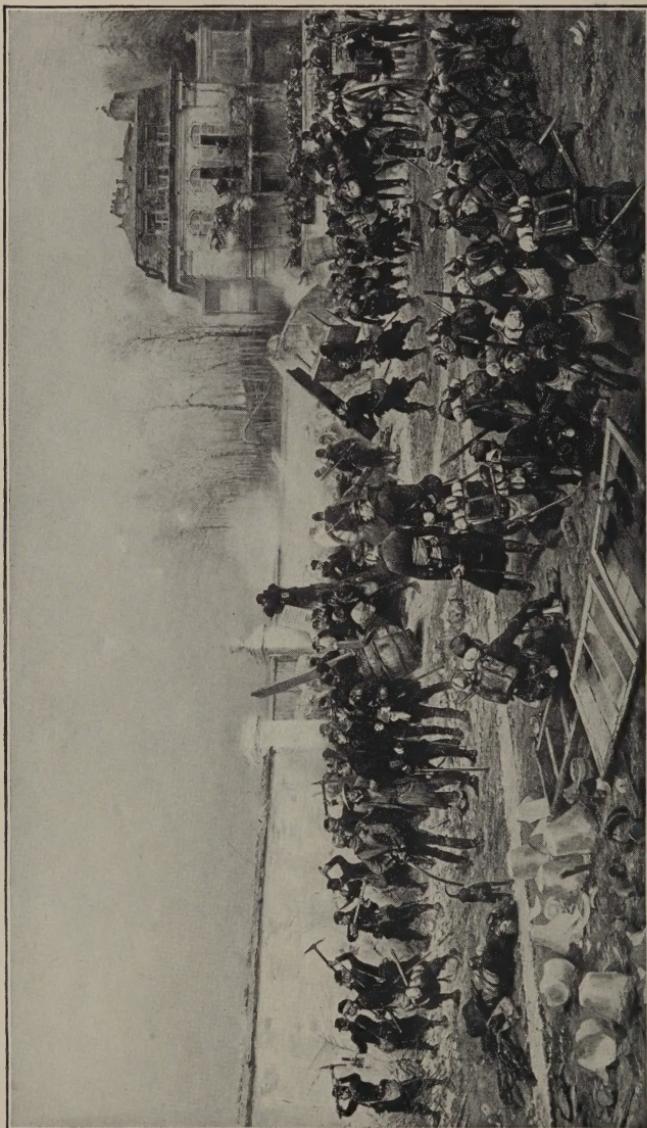
LIBRARY

Please Return To:

2 Park Street, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

1

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES



THE DEFENSE OF CHAMPIGNY

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM FAMOUS PAINTINGS



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

COPYRIGHT, 1914, BY HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Published October 1914

PREFACE

THE contents of "The Boys' Book of Battles" have been chosen with two requirements in mind: first, that each selection should be of real interest in itself; second, that the selections, taken together, should give a graphic picture of the development of warfare from the earliest times to the present day. In view of these requirements many battles have been included that have but little historical importance, but that are described in an intensely thrilling way or that are illustrative of interesting phases of warfare.

The selections have been taken, not only from books of history, but from fiction, poetry, and biography as well. This broad treatment is more than justified by the increased interest and value of the selections available. It would be difficult, for example, to find a more vivid or illuminating picture of all phases of a modern battle than in "The Fight before Sedan" which is taken from a novel, while the lilt of the verses in "The Battle of Naseby" drives home the fighting spirit of the Puritans as no prose description could.

Thanks are due to the following publishers for generously permitting the use of the copyrighted material specified below:—

G. P. Putnam's Sons:

The Victory of the Khita. From "Notes from the Nile," by H. D. Rawnsley.

PREFACE

A. C. McClurg & Company.

The Storming of the Sky-City. From "The Spanish Pioneers," by Charles F. Lummis.

Harper & Brothers.

The Battle of the Pyramids, and The Crossing of the Beresina River. From "The History of Napoleon Bonaparte," by John S. C. Abbott.

The Macmillan Company:

The Fight before Sedan. From "The Downfall," by Émile Zola.

CONTENTS

THE VICTORY OVER THE KHITA	<i>Pen-ta-ur</i>	3
THE BATTLE OF MARATHON	<i>E. S. Creasy</i>	12
THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ	<i>John Buchan</i>	23
THE SIEGE OF PLATÆA	<i>Thucydides</i>	45
HOW HANNIBAL MADE HIS WAY TO ITALY	<i>Livy</i>	57
JULIUS CÆSAR IN GAUL	<i>T. Rice Holmes</i>	73
A VIKING SEA-FIGHT	<i>From the Heimskringla</i>	84
THE LAST DANISH INVASION	<i>Edward Bulwer-Lytton</i>	100
THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS	<i>Robert Wace</i>	114
THE BATTLE OF CRÉCY	<i>Sir John Froissart</i>	128
THE DEATH OF WINKELRIED	<i>Walter Thornbury</i>	134
THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT	<i>Michael Drayton</i>	139
THE BATTLE OF BOSWORTH FIELD	<i>Owen Rhoscomyl</i>	144
ON THE FIELD OF FLODDEN	<i>Sir Walter Scott</i>	152
THE SIEGE OF LEYDEN	<i>John Lothrop Motley</i>	157
THE BATTLE OF IVRY	<i>Thomas Babington Macaulay</i>	169
THE REVENGE: A BALLAD OF THE FLEET		
	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	173
THE STORMING OF THE SKY-CITY	<i>Charles F. Lummis</i>	180
GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS AT LÜTZEN		
	<i>Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller</i>	196
THE BATTLE OF NASEBY	<i>Thomas Babington Macaulay</i>	206
GRANDMOTHER'S STORY OF BUNKER HILL BATTLE		
	<i>Oliver Wendell Holmes</i>	211
THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE SERAPIS AND THE BON HOMME		
RICHARD	<i>Joel Tyler Headley</i>	221
IN THE REVOLT OF THE VENDÉE	<i>Victor Hugo</i>	230
THE BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS	<i>John S. C. Abbott</i>	240
HOHENLINDEN	<i>Thomas Campbell</i>	254
TRAFAVGAR	<i>William C. Bennett</i>	256
THE CROSSING OF THE BERESINA RIVER	<i>John S. C. Abbott</i>	261

CONTENTS

WATERLOO	<i>Douglas Brooke Wheelton Sladen</i>	267
WATERLOO	<i>Victor Hugo</i>	271
THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	291
TAKEN PRISONER AT SHILOH	<i>Henry M. Stanley</i>	294
A DRUMMER BOY AT GETTYSBURG	<i>Harry M. Kieffer</i>	309
FARRAGUT	<i>W. T. Meredith</i>	326
THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN	<i>Émile Zola</i>	329
THE INDIAN STORY OF CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT .	<i>James McLaughlin</i>	353
A MODERN BATTLEFIELD	<i>Julian Ralph</i>	370
FIGHTING IN DARKEST AFRICA	<i>Gustav Freyssen</i>	377
THE ATTACK UPON PORT ARTHUR .	<i>Lieutenant Tadayoshi Sakurai</i>	387
THE SIEGE OF ADRIANOPOLE	<i>Philip Gibbs</i>	393
A MEMORABLE RETREAT	<i>Sir John French</i>	398
FIGHTING IN MID-AIR	<i>Lieutenant Werner</i>	407

ILLUSTRATIONS

THE DEFENSE OF CHAMPIGNY.	<i>Jean Baptiste Édouard Detaille</i>	
		Frontispiece
CONQUESTS OF RAMESSES II	<i>Egyptian Wall-Painting</i>	10
HANNIBAL CROSSING THE RHONE	<i>Henry Paul Motte</i>	60
MORNING OF THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT . . .	<i>Sir John Gilbert</i>	140
BONAPARTE BEFORE THE SPHINX	<i>Jean Léon Gérôme</i>	242
TRAFalCAR	<i>W. C. Stanfield</i>	258
PASSAGE OF THE BERESINA	<i>J. H. Van Papendrecht</i>	264
"SCOTLAND FOREVER!" . . .	<i>Elizabeth Thompson (Lady Butler)</i>	270
EVENING OF THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO . . .	<i>Ernest Crofts</i>	288
THE RETURN OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE		
	<i>Elizabeth Thompson (Lady Butler)</i>	292
GETTYSBURG FIFTY YEARS AFTER . . .	<i>From a Photograph</i>	324
AN AUGUST MORNING WITH FARRAGUT . . .	<i>W. H. Overend</i>	328
GERMAN WOUNDED IN THE GALLERY OF MIRRORS, VERSAILLES		
	<i>Victor Bachereau Reverchon</i>	352
THE SOLDIER'S DREAM	<i>Jean Baptiste Édouard Detaille</i>	406

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

THE VICTORY OVER THE KHITA

BY PEN-TA-UR, 1326 B.C. PUT INTO METER BY
HARDWICKE D. RAWNSLEY

[By order of Rameses, this poem was inscribed upon the walls of five temples, one of which was at Karnak. On these walls were also engraved enormous illustrations of the scenes of the poem, commemorating especially the exploits of the king. (See illustration at page 10.)

The Editor.]

THEN the king of Khita-land,
With his warriors made a stand,
But he durst not risk his hand
In battle with our Pharaoh;
So his chariots drew away,
Unnumbered as the sand,
And they stood, three men of war
On each car;
And gathered all in force
Was the flower of his army, for the fight in full array,
But advance, he did not dare,
Foot or horse.

So in ambush there they lay,
Northwest of Kadesh town;
And while these were in their lair,
Others went forth south of Kadesh, on our midst, their
charge was thrown
With such weight, our men went down,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

For they took us unaware,
And the legion of Pra-Hormakhu gave way.

But at the western side
Of Arunatha's tide,
Near the city's northern wall, our Pharaoh had his
place.

And they came unto the king,
And they told him our disgrace;
Then Rameses uprose, like his father,¹ Month, in might,
All his weapons took in hand,
And his armor did he don,
Just like Baal, fit for fight;
And the noble pair of horses that carried Pharaoh on,
Lo! "Victory of Thebes" was their name,
And from out the royal stables of great Miamun they
came.

Then the king he lashed each horse,
And they quickened up their course,
And he dashed into the middle of the hostile, Hittite
host,
All alone, none other with him, for he counted not the
cost.

Then he looked behind, and found
That the foe were all around,
Two thousand and five hundred of their chariots of war;
And the flower of the Hittites, and their helpers, in a
ring —
Men of Masu, Keshkesh, Pidasa, Malunna, Arathu,

¹ Month, or Mentu, as one of the aspects of the sun-god Ra, was worshiped at Thebes.

THE VICTORY OVER THE KHITA

Qazauadana, Kadesh, Akerith, Leka and Khilibu —
Cut off the way behind,
Retreat he could not find;
There were three men on each car,
And they gathered all together, and closed upon the
king.

“Yea, and not one of my princes, of my chief men and
my great,
Was with me, not a captain, not a knight;
For my warriors and chariots had left me to my fate,
Not one was there to take his part in fight.”

Then spake Pharaoh, and he cried: “Father Ammon,
where art thou?

Shall a sire forget his son?
Is there aught without thy knowledge I have done?
From the judgments of thy mouth when have I gone?
Have I e'er transgressed thy word?
Disobeyed, or broke a vow?
Is it right, who rules in Egypt, Egypt's lord,
Should e'er before the foreign peoples bow,
Or own their rod?

Whate'er may be the mind of this Hittite herdsman-
horde,

Sure Ammon¹ should stand higher than the wretch who
knows no God?

Father Ammon, is it nought
That to thee I dedicated noble monuments, and filled
Thy temples with the prisoners of war?
That for thee a thousand years shall stand the shrines
I dared to build?

¹ The king, probably, is here identifying himself with Ammon.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

That to thee my palace-substance I have brought,
That tribute unto thee from afar
A whole land comes to pay,
That to thee ten thousand oxen for sacrifice I fell,
And burn upon thine altars the sweetest woods that
smell;
That all thy heart required, my hand did ne'er gainsay?
I have built for thee tall gates and wondrous works,
beside the Nile,
I have raised thee mast on mast,
For eternity to last,
From Elephantin's isle
The obelisks for thee I have conveyed,
It is I who brought alone
The everlasting stone,
It is I who sent for thee,
The ships upon the sea,
To pour into thy coffers the wealth of foreign trade;
Is it told that such a thing
By any other king,
At any other time, was done at all?
Let the wretch be put to shame
Who refuses thy commands,
But honor to his name
Who to Ammon lifts his hands.
To the full of my endeavor,
With a willing heart forever,
I have acted unto thee,
And to thee, great God, I call;
For behold! now, Ammon, I,
In the midst of many peoples, all unknown,
Unnumbered as the sand,

THE VICTORY OVER THE KHITA

Here I stand,
All alone;
There is no one at my side,
My warriors and chariots afeared,
Have deserted me, none heard
My voice, when to the cravens I, their king, for succor,
cried.
But I find that Ammon's grace
Is better far to me
Than a million fighting men and ten thousand chariots
be.
Yea, better than ten thousand, be they brother, be they
son,
When with hearts that beat like one,
Together for to help me they are gathered in one place.
The might of men is nothing, it is Ammon who is lord,
What has happened here to me is according to thy
word,
And I will not now transgress thy command;
But alone, as here I stand,
To thee my cry I send,
Unto earth's extremest end,
Saying, 'Help me, father Ammon, against the Hittite
horde.'"

Then my voice it found an echo in Hermonthis' temple-
hall,
Ammon heard it, and he came unto my call;
And for joy I gave a shout,
From behind, his voice cried out,
"I have hastened to thee, Ramses Miamun,
Behold! I stand with thee,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Behold! 't is I am he,
Own father thine, the great god Ra, the sun.
Lo! mine hand with thine shall fight,
And mine arm is strong above
The hundreds of ten thousands, who against thee do
unite,
Of victory am I lord, and the brave heart do I love,
I have found in thee a spirit that is right,
And my soul it doth rejoice in thy valor and thy might."

Then all this came to pass, I was changèd in my heart
Like Monthu, god of war, was I made,
With my left hand hurled the dart,
With my right I swung the blade,
Fierce as Baal in his time, before their sight.
Two thousand and five hundred pairs of horses were
around,
And I flew into the middle of their ring,
By my horse-hoofs they were dashed all in pieces to the
ground,
None raised his hand in fight,
For the courage in their breasts had sunken quite;
And their limbs were loosed for fear,
And they could not hurl the dart,
And they had not any heart
To use the spear;
And I cast them to the water,
Just as crocodiles fall in from the bank,
So they sank.
And they tumbled on their faces, one by one,
At my pleasure I made slaughter,
So that none

THE VICTORY OVER THE KHITA

E'er had time to look behind, or backward fled;
Where he fell, did each one lay
On that day,
From the dust none ever lifted up his head.

Then the wretched king of Khita, he stood still,
With his warriors and his chariots all about him in a ring,
Just to gaze upon the valor of our king
In the fray.
And the king was all alone,
Of his men and chariots none
To help him; but the Hittite of his gazing soon had fill,
For he turned his face in flight, and sped away.
Then his princes forth he sent,
To battle with our lord,
Well equipped with bow and sword
And all goodly armament,
Chiefs of Leka, Masa, Kings of Malunna, Arathu,
Qar-qa-mash, of the Dardani, of Keshkesh, Khilibu.
And the brothers of the king were all gathered in one
place,
Two thousand and five hundred pairs of horse —
And they came right on in force,
The fury of their faces to the flaming of my face.

Then, like Monthu in his might,
I rushed on them apace,
And I let them taste my hand
In a twinkling moment's space.
Then cried one unto his mate,
"This is no man, this is he,
This is Suteck, god of hate,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

With Baal in his blood;
Let us hasten, let us flee,
Let us save our souls from death,
Let us take to heel and try our lungs and breath.”
And before the king’s attack,
Hands fell, and limbs were slack,
They could neither aim the bow, nor thrust the spear,
But just looked at him who came
Charging on them, like a flame,
And the King was as a griffin in the rear.
(Behold thus speaks the Pharaoh, let all know),
“I struck them down, and there escaped me none.
Then I lifted up my voice, and I spake,
Ho! my warriors, charioteers,
Away with craven fears,
Halt, stand, and courage take,
Behold I am alone,
Yet Ammon is my helper, and his hand is with me now.”

When my Menna, charioteer, beheld in his dismay,
How the horses swarmed around us, lo! his courage fled
away,
And terror and affright
Took possession of him quite;
And straightway he cried out to me, and said,
“Gracious lord and bravest king, savior-guard
Of Egypt in the battle, be our ward;
Behold we stand alone, in the hostile Hittite ring,
Save for us the breath of life,
Give deliverance from the strife,
Oh! protect us, Ramses Miamun! Oh! save us, mighty
King!”

CONQUESTS OF RAMESES II



THE VICTORY OVER THE KHITA

Then the King spake to his squire, "Halt! take courage,
charioteer,
As a sparrow-hawk swoops down upon his prey,
So I swoop upon the foe, and I will slay,
I will hew them into pieces, I will dash them into dust;
Have no fear,
Cast such evil thought away,
These godless men are wretches that in Ammon put no
trust."

Then the king, he hurried forward, on the Hittite host he
flew,
"For the sixth time that I charged them," says the king
— and listen well,
"Like Baal in his strength, on their rearward, lo! I fell,
And I killed them, none escaped me, and I slew, and
slew, and slew."

THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

[490 B.C.]

BY E. S. CREASY

[IN 490 B.C., the Persians set out to conquer Greece. They landed at Marathon, and here was fought the battle which prevented the forces of Asia from sweeping over all Europe.

The Editor.]

MILTIADES felt no hesitation as to the course which the Athenian army ought to pursue; and earnestly did he press his opinion on his brother-generals. Practically acquainted with the organization of the Persian armies, Miltiades felt convinced of the superiority of the Greek troops, if properly handled; he saw with the military eye of a great general the advantage which the position of the forces gave him for a sudden attack, and as a profound politician he felt the perils of remaining inactive, and of giving treachery time to ruin the Athenian cause.

One officer in the council of war had not yet voted. This was Callimachus the war-ruler. The votes of the generals were five and five, so that the voice of Callimachus, would be decisive.

On that vote, in all human probability, the destiny of all the nations of the world depended. Miltiades turned to him, and in simple soldierly eloquence, the substance of which we may read faithfully reported in Herodotus, who had conversed with the veterans of Marathon, the great Athenian thus adjured his countryman to vote for giving battle.

THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

“It now rests with you, Callimachus, either to enslave Athens, or, by assuring her freedom, to win yourself an immortality of fame, such as not even Harmodius and Aristogiton have acquired; for never, since the Athenians were a people, were they in such danger as they are in at this moment. If they bow the knee to these Medes, they are to be given up to Hippias, and you know what they then will have to suffer. But if Athens comes victorious out of this contest, she has it in her to become the first city of Greece. Your vote is to decide whether we are to join battle or not. If we do not bring on a battle presently, some factious intrigue will disunite the Athenians, and the city will be betrayed to the Medes. But if we fight, before there is anything rotten in the state of Athens, I believe that, provided the gods will give fair play and no favor, we are able to get the best of it in an engagement.”

The vote of the brave war-ruler was gained, the council determined to give battle; and such was the ascendancy and acknowledged military eminence of Miltiades, that his brother-generals one and all gave up their days of command to him, and cheerfully acted under his orders. Fearful, however, of creating any jealousy, and of so failing to obtain the vigorous coöperation of all parts of his small army, Miltiades waited till the day when the chief command would have come round to him in regular rotation before he led the troops against the enemy.

The inaction of the Asiatic commanders during this interval appears strange at first sight; but Hippias was with them, and they and he were aware of their chance of a bloodless conquest through the machinations of his

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

partisans among the Athenians. The nature of the ground also explains in many points the tactics of the opposite generals before the battle, as well as the operations of the troops during the engagement.

The plain of Marathon, which is about twenty-two miles distant from Athens, lies along the bay of the same name on the northeastern coast of Attica. The plain is nearly in the form of a crescent, and about six miles in length. It is about two miles broad in the center, where the space between the mountains and the sea is greatest, but it narrows toward either extremity, the mountains coming close down to the water at the horns of the bay. There is a valley trending inward from the middle of the plain, and a ravine comes down to it to the southward. Elsewhere it is closely girt round on the land side by rugged limestone mountains, which are thickly studded with pines, olive trees, and cedars, and overgrown with the myrtle, arbutus, and the other low odoriferous shrubs that everywhere perfume the Attic air. The level of the ground is now varied by the mound raised over those who fell in the battle, but it was an unbroken plain when the Persians encamped on it. There are marshes at each end, which are dry in spring and summer and then offer no obstruction to the horseman, but are commonly flooded with rain and so rendered impracticable for cavalry in the autumn, the time of year at which the action took place.

The Greeks, lying encamped on the mountains, could watch every movement of the Persians on the plain below, while they were enabled completely to mask their own. Miltiades also had, from his position, the power of giving battle whenever he pleased, or of de-

THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

laying it at his discretion, unless Datis were to attempt the perilous operation of storming the heights.

Miltiades, on the afternoon of a September day, 490 B.C., gave the word for the Athenian army to prepare for battle. There were many local associations connected with those mountain heights which were calculated powerfully to excite the spirits of the men, and of which the commanders well knew how to avail themselves in their exhortations to their troops before the encounter. Marathon itself was a region sacred to Hercules. Close to them was the fountain of Macaria, who had in days of yore devoted herself to death for the liberty of her people. The very plain on which they were to fight was the scene of the exploits of their national hero, Theseus; and there, too, as old legends told, the Athenians and the Heraclidæ had routed the invader, Eurystheus. These traditions were not mere cloudy myths or idle fictions, but matters of implicit earnest faith to the men of that day, and many a fervent prayer arose from the Athenian ranks to the heroic spirits who, while on earth, had striven and suffered on that very spot, and who were believed to be now heavenly powers, looking down with interest on their still beloved country, and capable of interposing with superhuman aid in its behalf.

According to old national custom, the warriors of each tribe were arrayed together; neighbor thus fighting by the side of neighbor, friend by friend, and the spirit of emulation and the consciousness of responsibility excited to the very utmost. The war-ruler, Callimachus, had the leading of the right wing; the Platæans formed the extreme left; and Themistocles and Aristides commanded

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

the center. The line consisted of the heavy armed spear-men only; for the Greeks (until the time of Iphicrates) took little or no account of light-armed soldiers in a pitched battle, using them only in skirmishes, or for the pursuit of a defeated enemy. The panoply of the regular infantry consisted of a long spear, of a shield, helmet, breast-plate, greaves, and short sword. Thus equipped, they usually advanced slowly and steadily into action in a uniform phalanx of about eight spears deep. But the military genius of Miltiades led him to deviate on this occasion from the commonplace tactics of his countrymen. It was essential for him to extend his line so as to cover all the practicable ground, and to secure himself from being outflanked and charged in the rear by the Persian horse. This extension involved the weakening of his line. Instead of a uniform reduction of its strength, he determined on detaching principally from his center, which, from the nature of the ground, would have the best opportunities for rallying, if broken; and on strengthening his wings so as to insure advantage at those points; and he trusted to his own skill and to his soldiers' discipline for the improvement of that advantage into decisive victory.

In this order, and availing himself probably of the inequalities of the ground, so as to conceal his preparations from the enemy till the last possible moment, Miltiades drew up the eleven thousand infantry whose spears were to decide this crisis in the struggles between the European and the Asiatic worlds. The sacrifices by which the favor of heaven was sought, and its will consulted, were announced to show propitious omens. The trumpet sounded for action, and, chanting the hymn of

THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

battle, the little army bore down upon the host of the foe. Then, too, along the mountain slopes of Marathon must have resounded the mutual exhortation, which Æschylus, who fought in both battles, tells us was afterward heard over the waves of Salamis: "On, sons of the Greeks! Strike for the freedom of your country! Strike for the freedom of your children and of your wives — for the shrines of your fathers' gods, and for the sepulchers of your sires. All — all are now staked upon the strife."

Instead of advancing at the usual slow pace of the phalanx, Miltiades brought his men on at a run. They were all trained in the exercise of the palæstra, so that there was no fear of their ending the charge in breathless exhaustion; and it was of the deepest importance for him to traverse as rapidly as possible the mile or so of level ground that lay between the mountain foot and the Persian outposts, and so to get his troops into close action before the Asiatic cavalry could mount, form, and maneuver against him, or their archers keep him long under fire, and before the enemy's generals could fairly deploy their masses.

"When the Persians," said Herodotus, "saw the Athenians running down on them, without horse or bowmen, and scanty in numbers, they thought them a set of madmen rushing upon certain destruction." They began, however, to prepare to receive them, and the Eastern chiefs arrayed, as quickly as time and place allowed, the varied races who served in their motley ranks. Mountaineers from Hyrcania and Afghanistan, wild horsemen from the steppes of Khorassan, the black archers of Ethiopia, swordsmen from the banks of

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

the Indus, the Oxus, the Euphrates, and the Nile, made ready against the enemies of the Great King. But no national cause inspired them except the division of native Persians; and in the large host there was no uniformity of language, creed, race, or military system. Still, among them there were many gallant men, under a veteran general; they were familiarized with victory, and in contemptuous confidence, their infantry, which alone had time to form, awaited the Athenian charge. On came the Greeks, with one unwavering line of leveled spears, against which the light targets, the short lances and scimitars of the Orientals, offered weak defense. The front rank of the Asiatics must have gone down to a man at the first shock. Still they recoiled not, but strove by individual gallantry and by the weight of numbers to make up for the disadvantages of weapons and tactics, and to bear back the shallow line of the Europeans. In the center, where the native Persians and the Sacæ fought, they succeeded in breaking through the weakened part of the Athenian phalanx; and the tribes led by Aristides and Themistocles were, after a brave resistance, driven back over the plain, and chased by the Persians up the valley toward the inner country. There the nature of the ground gave the opportunity of rallying and renewing the struggle. Meanwhile, the Greek wings, where Miltiades had concentrated his chief strength, had routed the Asiatics opposed to them; and the Athenian and Platæan officers, instead of pursuing the fugitives, kept their troops well in hand, and, wheeling round, they formed the two wings together. Miltiades instantly led them against the Persian center, which had hitherto been triumphant, but which now fell back, and

THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

prepared to encounter these new and unexpected assailants. Aristides and Themistocles renewed the fight with their reorganized troops, and the full force of the Greeks was brought into close action with the Persian and Sacian divisions of the enemy. Datis's veterans strove hard to keep their ground, and evening was approaching before the stern encounter was decided.

But the Persians, with their slight wicker shields, destitute of body-armor, and never taught by training to keep the even front and act with the regular movement of the Greek infantry, fought at heavy disadvantage with their shorter and feebler weapons against the compact array of well-armed Athenian and Plataean spearmen, all perfectly drilled to perform each necessary evolution in concert, and to preserve a uniform and unwavering line in battle. In personal courage and in bodily activity the Persians were not inferior to their adversaries. Their spirits were not yet cowed by the recollection of former defeats; and they lavished their lives freely, rather than forfeit the fame which they had won by so many victories. While their rear ranks poured an incessant shower of arrows over the heads of their comrades, the foremost Persians kept rushing forward, sometimes singly, sometimes in desperate groups of twelve or ten, upon the projecting spears of the Greeks, striving to force a lane into the phalanx, and to bring their scimitars and daggers into play. But the Greeks felt their superiority, and though the fatigue of the long-continued action told heavily on their inferior numbers, the sight of the carnage that they dealt upon their assailants nerved them to fight still more fiercely on.

At last the previously unvanquished lords of Asia

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

turned their backs and fled, and the Greeks followed, striking them down, to the water's edge, where the invaders were now hastily launching their galleys, and seeking to embark and fly.Flushed with success, the Athenians attacked and strove to fire the fleet. But here the Asiatics resisted desperately, and the principal loss sustained by the Greeks was in the assault on the ships. Here fell the brave war-ruler Callimachus, the general Stesilaus, and other Athenians of note. Seven galleys were fired; but the Persians succeeded in saving the rest. They pushed off from the fatal shore; but even here the skill of Datis did not desert him, and he sailed round to the western coast of Attica, in hopes to find the city unprotected, and to gain possession of it from some of the partisans of Hippias. Miltiades, however, saw and counteracted his maneuver. Leaving Aristides and the troops of his tribe to guard the spoil and the slain, the Athenian commander led his conquering army by a rapid night march back across the country to Athens. And when the Persian fleet had doubled the Cape of Sunium and sailed up to the Athenian harbor in the morning, Datis saw arrayed on the heights above the city the troops before whom his men had fled on the preceding evening. All hope of further conquest in Europe for the time was abandoned, and the baffled armada returned to the Asiatic coasts.

After the battle had been fought, but while the dead bodies were yet on the ground, the promised reinforcement from Sparta arrived. Two thousand Lacedæmonian spearmen, starting immediately after the full moon, had marched the hundred and fifty miles between Athens and Sparta in the wonderfully short time of three days.

THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

Though too late to share in the glory of the action, they requested to be allowed to march to the battle-field to behold the Medes. They proceeded thither, gazed on the dead bodies of the invaders, and then praising the Athenians and what they had done, they returned to Lacedæmon.

The number of the Persian dead was 6400; of the Athenians, 192. The number of the Platæans who fell is not mentioned; but as they fought in the part of the army which was not broken, it cannot have been large.

The apparent disproportion between the losses of the two armies is not surprising when we remember the armor of the Greek spearmen, and the impossibility of heavy slaughter being inflicted by sword or lance on troops so armed, as long as they kept firm in their ranks.

The Athenian slain were buried on the field of battle. This was contrary to the usual custom, according to which the bones of all who fell fighting for their country in each year were deposited in a public sepulcher in the suburb of Athens called the Cerameicus. But it was felt that a distinction ought to be made in the funeral honors paid to the men of Marathon, even as their merit had been distinguished over that of all other Athenians. A lofty mound was raised on the plain of Marathon, beneath which the remains of the men of Athens who fell in the battle were deposited. Ten columns were erected on the spot, one for each of the Athenian tribes; and on the monumental column of each tribe were graven the names of those of its members whose glory it was to have fallen in the great battle of liberation. The antiquarian Pausanias read those

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

names there six hundred years after the time when they were first graven. The columns have long since perished, but the mound still marks the spot where the noblest heroes of antiquity repose.

THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ

[480 B.C.]

BY JOHN BUCHAN

[IN the fifth century B.C., Persia was the most powerful empire in the world. Its ruler, Darius, became enraged at the Greeks because of the assistance which they gave to the Asiatic Greeks in their attempt to win freedom from his control. He was completely routed at Marathon; but ten years later his son and successor Xerxes, after vast preparations, set out to conquer and punish the little country which had dared to oppose a Persian command. His forces were met at the narrow pass of Thermopylæ by Leonidas with a handful of Spartans and their allies. After two days of fruitless attack on the part of the invaders, a treacherous Greek pointed out to them a path over the mountains by which they could get to the rear of the Greeks. The Spartan soldiers knew that nothing but death lay before them, but the laws of their country forbade flight from an enemy. They fought like demons, but every man was slain.

The Editor.]

HE pushed the matted locks from his brow, as he peered into the mist. His hair was thick with salt, and his eyes smarted from the green-wood fire on the poop. The four slaves who crouched beside the thwarts — Carians, with thin, birdlike faces — were in a pitiable case, their hands blue with oar-weals and the lash-marks on their shoulders beginning to gape from sun and sea. The Lemnian himself bore marks of ill-usage. His cloak was still sopping, his eyes heavy with watching, and his lips black and cracked with thirst. Two days before, the

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

storm had caught him and swept his little craft into mid-Ægean. He was a sailor, come of sailor stock, and he had fought the gale manfully and well. But the sea had burst his water-jars, and the torments of drought had been added to his toil. He had been driven south almost to Scyros, but had found no harbor. Then a weary day with the oars had brought him close to the Eubcean shore, when a freshet of storm drove him seaward again. Now at last, in this northerly creek of Sciathos, he had found shelter and a spring. But it was a perilous place, for there were robbers in the bushy hills — mainland men who loved above all things to rob an islander; and out at sea, as he looked toward Pelion, there seemed something ado which boded little good. There was deep water beneath a ledge of cliff, half covered by a tangle of wildwood. So Atta lay in the bows, looking through the trails of vine at the racing tides now reddening in the dawn.

The storm had hit others besides him, it seemed. The channel was full of ships, aimless ships that tossed between tide and wind. Looking closer, he saw that they were all wreckage. There had been tremendous doings in the north, and a navy of some sort had come to grief. Atta was a prudent man and knew that a broken fleet might be dangerous. There might be men lurking in the maimed galleys who would make short work of the owner of a battered but navigable craft. At first he thought that the ships were those of the Hellenes. The troublesome fellows were everywhere in the islands, stirring up strife, and robbing the old lords. But the tides running strongly from the east were bringing some of the wreckage in an eddy into the bay. He lay closer

THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ

and watched the spars and splintered poops as they neared him. These were no galleys of the Hellenes. Then came a drowned man, swollen and horrible; then another — swarthy, hook-nosed fellows, all yellow with the sea. Atta was puzzled. They must be the men from the east about whom he had been hearing.

Long ere he left Lemnos there had been news about the Persians. They were coming like locusts out of the dawn, swarming over Ionia and Thrace, men and ships numerous beyond telling. They meant no ill to honest islanders; a little earth and water were enough to win their friendship. But they meant death to the *ἱβρους*¹ of the Hellenes. Atta was on the side of the invaders; he wished them well in their war with his ancient foes. They would eat them up, Athenians, Lacedæmonians, Corinthians, Æginetans, men of Argos and Elis, and none would be left to trouble him. But in the mean time something had gone wrong. Clearly there had been no battle. As the bodies butted against the side of the galley, he hooked up one or two and found no trace of a wound. Poseidon had grown cranky, and had claimed victims. The god would be appeased by this time, and all would go well. Danger being past, he bade the men get ashore and fill the water-skins. “God’s curse on all Hellenes!” he said, as he soaked up the cold water from the spring in the thicket.

About noon he set sail again. The wind sat in the northeast, but the wall of Pelion turned it into a light stern breeze which carried him swiftly westward. The four slaves, still leg-weary and arm-weary, lay like logs beside the thwarts. Two slept; one munched some salty

¹ Riotousness.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

figs; the fourth, the headman, stared wearily forward with ever and again a glance back at his master. But the Lemnian never looked his way. His head was on his breast as he steered, and he brooded on the sins of the Hellenes.

He was of the old Pelasgian stock, — the first lords of the land, who had come out of the soil at the call of God. The pillaging northmen had crushed his folk out of the mainlands and most of the islands, but in Lemnos they had met their match. It was a family story how every grown male had been slain, and how the women long after had slaughtered their conquerors in the night. "Lemnian deeds," said the Hellenes, when they wished to speak of some shameful thing; but to Atta the shame was a glory to be cherished forever. He and his kind were the ancient people, and the gods loved old things, as these new folk would find. Very especially he hated the men of Athens. Had not one of their captains, Miltiades, beaten the Lemnians and brought the island under Athenian sway? True, it was a rule only in name, for any Athenian who came alone to Lemnos would soon be cleaving the air from the highest cliff-top. But the thought irked his pride, and he gloated over the Persians' coming. The Great King from beyond the deserts would smite these outrageous upstarts. Atta would willingly give earth and water. It was the whim of a fantastic barbarian, and would be well repaid if the bastard Hellenes were destroyed. They spoke his own tongue, and worshiped his own gods, and yet did evil. Let the nemesis of Zeus devour them!

The wreckage pursued him everywhere. Dead men shouldered the side of the galley, and the straits were

THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ

stuck full of things like monstrous buoys, where tall ships had foundered. At Artemisium he thought he saw signs of an anchored fleet with the low poops of the Hellenes, and steered off to the northern shores. There, looking towards Κέτα and the Malian Gulf, he found an anchorage at sunset. The waters were ugly and the times ill, and he had come on an enterprise bigger than he had dreamed. The Lemnian was a stout fellow, but he had no love for needless danger. He laughed mirthlessly as he thought of his errand, for he was going to Hellas, to the shrine of the Hellenes.

It was a woman's doing, like most crazy enterprises. Three years ago his wife had labored hard in childbirth, and had had the whims of laboring women. Up in the keep of Larissa, on the windy hillside, there had been heart-searching and talk about the gods. The little olive-wood Hermes, the very private and particular god of Atta's folk, was good enough in simple things like a lambing or a harvest, but he was scarcely fit for heavy tasks. Atta's wife declared that her lord lacked piety. There were mainland gods who repaid worship, but his scorn of all Hellenes made him blind to the merits of these potent divinities. At first Atta resisted. There was Attic blood in his wife, and he strove to argue with her unorthodox craving. But the woman persisted, and a Lemnian wife, as she is beyond other wives in virtue and comeliness, is beyond them in stubbornness of temper. A second time she was with child, and nothing would content her but that Atta should make his prayers to the stronger gods. Dodona was far away, and long ere he reached it his throat would be cut in the hills. But Delphi was but two days' journey from the Malian

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

coast, and the gods of Delphi, the Far-Darter, had surprising gifts, if one were to credit travelers' tales.

Atta yielded with an ill grace, and out of his wealth devised an offering to Apollo. So on this July day he found himself looking across the gulf to Kallidromos bound for a Hellenic shrine, but hating all Hellenes in his soul. A verse of Homer consoled him,—the words which Phocion spoke to Achilles. “Verily even the gods may be turned, they whose excellence and honor and strength are greater than thine; yet even these do men, when they pray, turn from their purpose with offerings of incense and pleasant vows.” The Far-Darter must hate the *iθpis* of these Hellenes, and be the more ready to avenge it since they dared to claim his countenance. “No race has ownership in the gods,” a Lemnian song-maker had said, when Atta had been questioning the ways of Poseidon.

The following dawn found him coasting past the north end of Eubcea, in the thin fog of a windless summer morn. He steered by the peak of Othrys and a spur of ΚEta, as he had learned from a slave who had traveled the road. Presently he was in the muddy Malian waters and the sun was scattering the mist on the landward side. And then he became aware of a greater commotion than Poseidon's play with the ships off Pelion. A murmur like a winter's storm came seaward. He lowered the sail which he had set to catch a chance breeze, and bade the men rest on their oars. An earthquake seemed to be tearing at the roots of the hills.

The mist rolled up and his hawk eyes saw a strange sight. The water was green and still around him, but shoreward it changed its color. It was a dirty red, and

THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ

things bobbed about in it like the Persians in the creek of Sciathos. On the strip of shore, below the sheer wall of Kallidromos, men were fighting — myriads of men, far away toward Locris they stretched in ranks and banners and tents till the eye lost them in the haze. There was no sail on the queer, muddy, red-edged sea; there was no man in the hills; but on that one flat ribbon of sand all the nations of the earth were warring. He remembered about the place: Thermopylæ, they called it, the Hot Gates. The Hellenes were fighting the Persians in the pass for their fatherland.

Atta was prudent, and loved not other men's quarrels. He gave the word to the rowers to row seaward. In twenty strokes they were in the mist again.

Atta was prudent, but he was also stubborn. He spent the day in a creek on the northern shore of the gulf, listening to the weird hum which came over the waters out of the haze. He cursed the delay. Up on Kallidromos would be clear, dry air and the path to Delphi among the oak woods. The Hellenes could not be fighting everywhere at once. He might find some spot on the shore far in their rear, where he could land and gain the hills. There was danger indeed, but once on the ridge he would be safe; and by the time he came back the Great King would have swept the defenders into the sea and be well on the road for Athens. He asked himself if it were fitting that a Lemnian should be stayed in his holy task by the struggles of Hellene and barbarian. His thoughts flew to his homestead at Larissa, and the dark-eyed wife who was awaiting his homecoming. He could not return without Apollo's favor; his manhood and the memory of his lady's eyes forbade

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

it. So, late in the afternoon he pushed off again and steered his galley for the south.

About sunset the mist cleared from the sea; but the dark falls swiftly in the shadow of the high hills, and Atta had no fear. With the night the hum sank to a whisper; it seemed that the invaders were drawing off to camp, for the sound receded to the west. At the last light the Lemnian touched a rock-point well in the rear of the defense. He noticed that the spume at the tide's edge was reddish and stuck to his hands like gum. Of a surety, much blood was flowing on that coast.

He bade his slaves return to the north shore and lie hidden there to await him. When he came back he would light a signal fire on the topmost bluff of Kallidromos. Let them watch for it and come to take him off. Then he seized his bow and quiver, and his short hunting spear, buckled his cloak about him, saw that the gift to Apollo was safe in the folds of it, and marched sturdily up the hillside.

The moon was in her first quarter, a slim horn which at her rise showed only the faint outline of the hill. Atta plodded steadfastly on, but he found the way hard. This was not like the crisp sea-turf of Lemnos, where among the barrows of the ancient dead, sheep and kine could find sweet fodder. Kallidromos ran up as steep as the roof of a barn. Cytisus and thyme and juniper grew rank, but, above all, the place was strewn with rocks, leg-twisting boulders, and great cliffs where eagles dwelt. Being a seaman, Atta had his bearings. The path to Delphi left the shore road near the Hot Gates, and went south by a rift of the mountain. If he went up the slope in a bee-line he must strike it in time and find better

THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ

going. Still it was an eerie place to be tramping after dark. The Hellenes had strange gods of the thicket and hillside, and he had no wish to intrude upon their sanctuaries. He told himself that next to the Hellenes he hated this country of theirs, where a man sweltered in hot jungles or tripped among hidden crags. He sighed for the cool beaches below Larissa, where the surf was white as the snows of Samothrace, and the fisher-boys sang round their smoking broth-pots.

Presently he found a path. It was not the mule road, worn by many feet, that he had looked for, but a little track which twined among the boulders. Still it eased his feet, so he cleared the thorns from his sandals, strapped his belt tighter, and stepped out more confidently. Up and up he went, making odd détours among the crags. Once he came to a promontory, and, looking down, saw lights twinkling from the Hot Gates. He had thought the course lay more southerly, but consoled himself by remembering that a mountain path must have many windings. The great matter was that he was ascending, for he knew that he must cross the ridge of Κeta before he struck the Locrian glens that led to the Far-Darter's shrine.

At what seemed the summit of the first ridge he halted for breath, and, prone on the thyme, looked back to sea. The Hot Gates were hidden, but across the gulf a single light shone from the far shore. He guessed that by this time his galley had been beached and his slaves were cooking supper. The thought made him homesick. He had beaten and cursed these slaves of his, times without number, but now in this strange land he felt them kinsfolk, men of his own household. Then he told himself

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

he was no better than a woman. Had he not gone sailing to Chalcedon and distant Pontus, many months' journey from home, while this was but a trip of days. In a week he would be welcomed home by a smiling wife, with a friendly god behind him.

The track still bore west, though Delphi lay in the south. Moreover, he had come to a broader road running through a little tableland. The highest peaks of ζ Eta were dark against the sky, and around him was a flat glade where oaks whispered in the night breezes. By this time he judged from the stars that midnight had passed, and he began to consider whether, now that he was beyond the fighting, he should not sleep and wait for dawn. He made up his mind to find a shelter, and in the aimless way of the night traveler, pushed on and on in the quest of it. The truth is, his mind was on Lemnos and a dark-eyed, white-armed dame spinning in the evening by the threshold. His eyes roamed among the oak trees, but vacantly and idly, and many a mossy corner was passed unheeded. He forgot his ill-temper, and hummed cheerfully the song his reapers sang in the barley-fields below his orchard. It was a song of sea-men turned husbandmen, for the gods it called on were the gods of the sea.

Suddenly he found himself crouching among the young oaks, peering and listening. There was something coming from the west. It was like the first mutterings of a storm in a narrow harbor, a steady rustling and whispering. It was not wind; he knew winds too well to be deceived. It was the tramp of light-shod feet among the twigs — many feet, for the sound remained steady,

THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ

while the noise of a few men will rise and fall. They were coming fast and coming silently. The war had reached far up Kallidromos.

Atta had played this game often in the little island wars. Very swiftly he ran back and away from the path, up the slope which he knew to be the first ridge of Kallidromos. The army, whatever it might be, was on the Delphian road. Were the Hellenes about to turn the flank of the Great King?

A moment later he laughed at his folly. For the men began to appear, and they were coming to meet him, coming from the west. Lying close in the brush-wood, he could see them clearly. It was well he had left the road, for they stuck to it, following every winding,—crouching, too, like hunters after deer. The first man he saw was a Hellene, but the ranks behind were no Hellenes. There was no glint of bronze or gleam of fair skin. They were dark, long-haired fellows, with spears like his own and round eastern caps and egg-shaped bucklers. Then Atta rejoiced. It was the Great King who was turning the flank of the Hellenes. They guarded the gate, the fools, while the enemy slipped through the roof.

He did not rejoice long. The van of the army was narrow and kept to the path, but the men behind were straggling all over the hillside. Another minute and he would be discovered. The thought was cheerless. It was true that he was an islander and friendly to the Persian, but up on the heights who would listen to his tale? He would be taken for a spy, and one of those thirsty spears would drink his blood. It must be farewell to Delphi for the moment, he thought, or farewell to Lemnos

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

forever. Crouching low, he ran back and away from the path to the crest of the sea-ridge of Kallidromos.

The men came nearer to him. They were keeping roughly to the line of the path, and drifted through the oak wood before him, an army without end. He had scarcely thought there were so many fighting men in the world. He resolved to lie there on the crest, in the hope that ere the first light they would be gone. Then he would push on to Delphi, leaving them to settle their quarrels behind him. These were hard times for a pious pilgrim.

But another noise caught his ear from the right. The army had flanking squadrons, and men were coming along the ridge. Very bitter anger rose in Atta's heart. He had cursed the Hellenes, and now he cursed the barbarians no less. Nay, he cursed all war, that spoiled the errands of peaceful folk. And then, seeking safety, he dropped over the crest on to the steep shoreward face of the mountain.

In an instant his breath had gone from him. He had slid down a long slope of scree, and then with a gasp found himself falling sheer into space. Another second, and he was caught in a tangle of bush, and then dropped once more upon scree, where he clutched desperately for handhold. Breathless and bleeding, he came to anchor on a shelf of greensward, and found himself blinking up at the crest, which seemed to tower a thousand feet above. There were men on the crest now. He heard them speak, and felt that they were looking down.

The shock kept him still till the men had passed. Then the terror of the place gripped him and he tried feverishly to retrace his steps. A dweller all his days among

THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ

gentle downs, he grew dizzy with the sense of being hung in space. But the only fruit of his efforts was to set him slipping again. This time he pulled up at a root of gnarled oak, which overhung the sheerest cliff on Kallidromos. The danger brought his wits back. He suddenly reviewed his case and found it desperate.

He could not go back, and, even if he did, he would meet the Persians. If he went on he would break his neck, or at the best fall into the Hellenes' hands. Oddly enough he feared his old enemies less than his friends. He did not think that the Hellenes would butcher him. Again, he might sit perched in his eyrie till they settled their quarrel or he fell off. He rejected this last way. Fall off he should for certain, unless he kept moving. Already he was giddy with the vertigo of the heights.

It was growing lighter. Suddenly he was looking not into a black world but to a pearl-gray floor, far beneath him. It was the sea, the thing he knew and loved. The sight screwed up his courage. He remembered that he was a Lemnian and a seafarer. He would be conquered neither by rock nor by Hellene nor by the Great King. Least of all by the last, who was a barbarian. Slowly, with clenched teeth and narrowed eyes, he began to clamber down a ridge which flanked the great cliff of Kallidromos. His plan was to reach the shore, and take the road to the east before the Persians completed their circuit. Some instinct told him that a great army would not take the track he had mounted by. There must be some longer and easier way debouching farther down the coast. He might yet have the good luck to slip between them and the sea.

The two hours which followed tried his courage hard.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Thrice he fell, and only a juniper root stood between him and death. His hands grew ragged, and his nails were worn to the quick. He had long ago lost his weapons; his cloak was in shreds, all save the breast-fold which held the gift to Apollo. The heavens brightened, but he dared not look around. He knew that he was traversing awesome places where a goat would scarcely tread. Many times he gave up hope of life. His head was swimming, and he was so deadly sick that often he had to lie gasping on some shoulder of rock less steep than the rest. But his anger kept him to his purpose. He was filled with fury at the Hellenes. It was they and their folly that had brought him these mischances. Some day —

He found himself sitting blinking on the shore of the sea. A furlong off, the water was lapping on the reefs. A man, larger than human in the morning mist, was standing above him.

"Greeting, stranger," said the voice. "By Hermes, you choose the difficult roads to travel."

Atta felt for broken bones, and, reassured, struggled to his feet.

"God's curse upon all mountains," he said. He staggered to the edge of the tide and laved his brow. The savor of salt revived him. He turned, to find the tall man at his elbow, and noted how worn and ragged he was, and yet how upright.

"When a pigeon is flushed from the rocks, there is a hawk near," said the voice.

Atta was angry. "A hawk!" he cried. "Ay, an army of eagles. There will be some rare flushing of Hellenes before evening."

THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ

"What frightened you, islander?" the stranger asked.
"Did a wolf bark up on the hillside?"

"Ay, a wolf. The wolf from the East with a multitude of wolflings. There will be fine eating soon in the pass."

The man's face grew dark. He put his hand to his mouth and called. Half a dozen sentries ran to join him. He spoke to them in the harsh Lacedæmonian speech which made Atta sick to hear. They talked with the back of the throat, and there was not an "s" in their words.

"There is mischief in the hills," the first man said.
"This islander has been frightened down over the rocks. The Persian is stealing a march on us."

The sentries laughed. One quoted a proverb about island courage. Atta's wrath flared and he forgot himself. He had no wish to warn the Hellenes, but it irked his pride to be thought a liar. He began to tell his story hastily, angrily, confusedly; and the men still laughed.

Then he turned eastward and saw the proof before him. The light had grown and the sun was coming up over Pelion. The first beam fell on the eastern ridge of Kallidromos, and there, clear on the sky-line, was the proof. The Persian was making a wide circuit, but moving shoreward. In a little he would be at the coast, and by noon at the Hellenes' rear.

His hearers doubted no more. Atta was hurried forward through the lines of the Greeks to the narrow throat of the pass, where behind a rough rampart of stones lay the Lacedæmonian headquarters. He was still giddy from the heights, and it was in a giddy dream that he traversed the misty shingles of the beach amid ranks of sleeping warriors. It was a grim place, for there were

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

dead and dying in it, and blood on every stone. But in the lee of the wall little fires were burning, and slaves were cooking breakfast. The smell of roasting flesh came pleasantly to his nostrils, and he remembered that he had had no meal since he crossed the gulf.

Then he found himself the center of a group who had the air of kings. They looked as if they had been years in war. Never had he seen faces so worn and so terribly scarred. The hollows in their cheeks gave them the air of smiling, and yet they were grave. Their scarlet vests were torn and muddied, and the armor which lay near was dinted like the scrap-iron before a smithy door. But what caught his attention was the eyes of the men. They glittered as no eyes he had ever seen before glittered. The sight cleared his bewilderment and took the pride out of his heart. He could not pretend to despise a folk who looked like Ares fresh from the wars of the Immortals.

They spoke among themselves in quiet voices. Scouts came and went, and once or twice one of the men, taller than the rest, asked Atta a question. The Lemnian sat in the heart of the group, sniffing the smell of cooking, and looking at the rents in his cloak and the long scratches on his legs. Something was pressing on his breast, and he found that it was Apollo's gift. He had forgotten all about it. Delphi seemed beyond the moon, and his errand a child's dream.

Then the king, for so he thought of the tall man, spoke:—

"You have done us a service, islander. The Persian is at our back and front, and there will be no escape for those who stay. Our allies are going home, for they do

THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ

not share our vows. We of Lacedæmon wait in the pass. If you go with the men of Corinth you will find a place of safety before noon. No doubt in the Euripus there is some boat to take you to your own land."

He spoke courteously, not in the rude Athenian way; and somehow the quietness of his voice and his glittering eyes roused wild longings in Atta's heart. His island pride was face to face with a greater — greater than he had ever dreamed of.

"Bid yon cooks give me some broth," he said gruffly.
"I am faint. After I have eaten, I will speak with you."

He was given food, and as he ate he thought. He was on trial before these men of Lacedæmon. More, the old faith of the Islands, the pride of the first masters, was at stake in his hands. He had boasted that he and his kind were the last of the men; now these Hellenes of Lacedæmon were preparing a great deed, and they deemed him unworthy to share in it. They offered him safety. Could he brook the insult?

He had forgotten that the cause of the Persian was his; that the Hellenes were the foes of his race. He saw only that the last test of manhood was preparing, and the manhood in him rose to greet the trial. An odd, wild ecstasy surged in his veins. It was not the lust of battle, for he had no love of slaying, or hate for the Persian, for he was his friend. It was the sheer joy of proving that the Lemnian stock had a starker pride than these men of Lacedæmon. They would die for their fatherland and their vows, but he, for a whim, a scruple, a delicacy of honor. His mind was so clear that no other course occurred to him. There was only one way for a man. He too would be dying for his fatherland, for

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

through him the island race would be ennobled in the eyes of gods and men.

Troops were filing fast to the east—Thebans, Corinthians.

"Time flies, islander," said the king's voice. "The hours of safety are slipping past."

Atta looked up carelessly. "I will stay," he said. "God's curse on all Hellenes! Little care I for your quarrels. It is nothing to me if your Hellas is under the heel of the East. But I care much for brave men. It shall never be said that a man of Lemnos, a son of the old race, fell back when Death threatened. I stay with you, men of Lacedæmon."

The king's eyes glittered; they seemed to peer into his heart.

"It appears they breed men in the islands," he said. "But you err. Death does not threaten. Death awaits us."

"It is all the same," said Atta. "But I crave a boon. Let me fight my last fight by your side. I am of older stock than you, and a king in my own country. I would strike my last blow among kings."

There was an hour of respite before battle was joined, and Atta spent it by the edge of the sea. He had been given arms, and in girding himself for the fight he had found Apollo's offering in his breast-fold. He was done with the gods of the Hellenes. His offering should go to the gods of his own people. So, calling upon Poseidon, he flung the little gold cup far out to sea. It flashed in the sunlight, and then sank in the soft green tides so noiselessly that it seemed as if the hand of the sea-god

THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ

had been stretched to take it. "Hail, Poseidon!" the Lemnian cried. "I am bound this day for the Ferryman. To you only I make prayer, and to the little Hermes of Larissa. Be kind to my kin when they travel the sea, and keep them islanders and seafarers forever. Hail, and farewell, God of my own folk!"

Then, while the little waves lapped on the white sand, Atta made a song. He was thinking of the homestead far up in the green downs, looking over to the snows of Samothrace. At this hour in the morning there would be a tinkle of sheep-bells as the flocks went down to the low pastures. Cool winds would be blowing, and the noise of the surf below the cliffs would come faint to the ear. In the hall the maids would be spinning, while their dark-haired mistress would be casting swift glances to the doorway, lest it might be filled any moment by the form of her returning lord. Outside in the checkered sunlight of the orchard the child would be playing with his nurse, crooning in childish syllables the chanty his father had taught him. And at the thought of his home a great passion welled up in Atta's heart. It was not regret, but joy and pride and aching love. In his antique island-creed the death he was awaiting was no other than a bridal. He was dying for the things he loved, and by his death they would be blessed eternally. He would not have long to wait before bright eyes came to greet him in the House of Shadows.

So Atta made the Song of Atta, and sang it then and later in the press of battle. It was a simple song, like the lays of seafarers. It put into rough verse the thought which cheers the heart of all adventurers, nay, which makes adventure possible for those who have much to

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

leave. It spoke of the shining pathway of the sea which is the Great Uniter. A man may lie dead in Pontus or beyond the Pillars of Hercules, but if he dies on the shore there is nothing between him and his fatherland. It spoke of a battle all the long dark night in a strange place — a place of marshes and black cliffs and shadowy terrors.

"In the dawn the sweet light comes," said the song,
"and the salt winds and the tides will bear me home." . . .

When in the evening the Persians took toll of the dead, they found one man who puzzled them. He lay among the tall Lacedæmonians, on the very lip of the sea, and around him were swaths of their countrymen. It looked as if he had been fighting his way to the water, and had been overtaken by death as his feet reached the edge. Nowhere in the pass did the dead lie so thick, and yet he was no Hellene. He was torn like a deer that the dogs had worried, but the little left of his garments and his features spoke of Eastern race. The survivors could tell nothing except that he had fought like a god, and had been singing all the while.

The matter came to the ear of the Great King, who was sore enough at the issue of the day. That one of his men had performed feats of valor beyond the Hellenes was a pleasant tale to tell. And so his captains reported it. Accordingly, when the fleet from Artemisium arrived next morning, and all but a few score Persians were shoveled into holes that the Hellenes might seem to have been conquered by a lesser force, Atta's body was laid out with pomp in the midst of the Lacedæmonians. And the seamen rubbed their eyes and thanked their

THE LEMNIAN: A STORY OF THERMOPYLÆ

strange gods that one man of the East had been found to match those terrible warriors whose name was a nightmare. Further, the Great King gave orders that the body of Atta should be embalmed and carried with the army, and that his name and kin should be sought out and duly honored. This latter was a task too hard for the staff, and no more was heard of it till months after, when the king, in full flight after Salamis, bethought him of the one man who had not played him false. Finding that his lieutenants had nothing to tell him, he eased five of them of their heads.

As it happened, the deed was not quite forgotten. An islander, a Lesbian and a cautious man, had fought at Thermopylæ in the Persian ranks, and had heard Atta's singing and seen how he fell. Long afterwards some errand took this man to Lemnos, and in the evening, speaking with the Elders, he told his tale and repeated something of the song. There was that in the words which gave the Lemnians a clue, the mention, I think, of the olive-wood Hermes and the snows of Samothrace. So Atta came to great honor among his own people, and his memory and his words were handed down to the generations. The song became a favorite island lay, and for centuries throughout the *Æ*gean seafaring men sang it when they turned their prows to wild seas. Nay, it traveled farther, for you will find part of it stolen by Euripides and put in a chorus of the "Andromache." There are echoes of it in some of the epigrams of the "Anthology"; and though the old days have gone, the simple fisher-folk still sing snatches in their barbarous dialect. The Klephths used to make a catch of it at night

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

round their fires in the hills, and only the other day I met a man on Scyros who had collected a dozen variants and was publishing them in a dull book on island folklore.

In the centuries which followed the great fight, the sea fell away from the roots of the cliffs, and left a mile of marshland. About fifty years ago a peasant, digging in a rice-field, found the cup which Atta had given to Poseidon. There was much talk about the discovery, and scholars debated hotly about its origin. To-day it is in the Munich Museum, and according to the new fashion in archæology it is labeled "Minoan," and kept in the Cretan Section. But any one who looks carefully will see behind the rim a neat little carving of a dolphin; and I happen to know that this was the private badge of Atta's house.

THE SIEGE OF PLATÆA

[427 B.C.]

BY THUCYDIDES

[THE cause of the Peloponnesian War was the rivalry between Sparta and Athens. The little city of Platæa was a faithful friend to Athens, and therefore the Spartans set about its conquest.

The Editor.]

ARCHIDAMUS first of all formed an inclosure round about them with the trees they had felled, so that no one could get out of the city. In the next place, they raised a mount of earth before the place, hoping that it could not long hold out a siege against the efforts of so large an army. Having felled a quantity of timber on Mount Cithæron, with it they framed the mount on either side, that thus cased it might perform the service of a wall, and that the earth might be kept from mouldering away too fast. Upon it they heaped a quantity of matter, both stones and earth, and whatever else would cement together and increase the bulk. This work employed them for seventy days and nights without intermission, all being alternately employed in it, so that one part of the army was carrying it on, whilst the other took the necessary refreshments of food and sleep. Those Lacedæmonians who had the command over the hired troops of the other states had the care of the work, and obliged them all to assist in carrying it on. The Platæans, seeing this mount raised to a great height, built a counterwork of wood, close to that part of the city wall against which

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

this mount of earth was thrown up, and strengthened the inside of it with bricks, which they got for this use by pulling down the adjacent houses. The wooden case was designed to keep it firm together, and prevent the whole pile from being weakened by its height. They further covered it over with sheepskins and hides of beasts, to defend the workmen from missive weapons, and to preserve the wood from being fired by the enemy. This work within was raised to a great height, and the mount was raised with equal expedition without. Upon this, the Platæans had resource to another device. They broke a hole through the wall, close to which the mount was raised, and drew the earth away from under it into the city. But this being discovered by the Peloponnesians, they threw into the hole hurdles made of reeds and stuffed with clay, which being of a firm consistence could not be dug away like earth. By this they were excluded, and so desisted for a while from their former practice. Yet digging a subterranean passage from out of the city, which they so luckily continued that it undermined the mount, they again withdrew the earth from under it. This practice long escaped the discovery of the besiegers, who still heaped on matter, yet the work grew rather less, as the earth was drawn away from the bottom, and that above fell in to fill up the void. However, still apprehensive that, as they were few in number, they should not be able long to hold out against such numerous besiegers, they had recourse to another project. They desisted from carrying on the great pile which was to counterwork the mount, and beginning at each end of it where the wall was low, they ran another wall in the form of a crescent along the inside of the city, that if the

THE SIEGE OF PLATÆA

great wall should be taken this might afterwards hold out, and might lay the enemy under the necessity of throwing up a fresh mount against it, and that thus the farther they advanced, the difficulties of the siege might be doubled, and be carried on with increase of danger.

When their mount was completed, the Peloponnesians played away their battering-engines against the wall; and one of them they worked so dexterously from the mount against the great pile within, that they shook it very much, and threw the Platæans into consternation. Others they applied in different parts against the wall, the force of which was broken by the Platæans, who threw ropes around them; they also tied large beams together, with long chains of iron at both ends of the beams, by which they hung downwards from two other transverse beams inclined and extended beyond the wall. These they drew along obliquely, and against whatever part they saw the engine of battery to be aimed, they let go the beams with a full swing of the chains, and so dropped them down directly upon it, which by the weight of the stroke broke off the beak of the battering engine. Upon this, the Peloponnesians, finding all their engines useless, and their mount effectually counterworked by the fortification within, concluded it a business of no little hazard to take the place amidst so many obstacles, and prepared to draw a circumvallation about it.

But first they were willing to try whether it were not possible to set the town on fire, and burn it down, as it was not large, by help of a brisk gale of wind; for they cast their thoughts towards every expedient of taking it without a large expense and a tedious blockade. Pro-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

curing for this purpose a quantity of fagots, they tossed them from their own mount into the void space between the wall and the inner fortification. As many hands were employed in this business, they had soon filled it up, and then proceeded to toss more of them into the other parts of the city lying beyond, as far as they could by the advantage which the eminence gave them. Upon these they threw fiery balls made of sulphur and pitch, which caught the fagots, and soon kindled such a flame as before this time no one had ever seen kindled by the art of man. It hath indeed sometimes happened, that wood growing upon mountains hath been so heated by the attrition of the winds, that without any other cause it hath broken out into fire and flame. But this was exceeding fierce; and the Platæans, who had baffled all other efforts, were very narrowly delivered from perishing by its fury; for it cleared the city to a great distance round about, so that no Platæan durst approach it: and if the wind had happened to have blown along with it, as the enemy hoped, they must all unavoidably have perished. It is now reported that a heavy rain, falling on a sudden, attended with claps of thunder, extinguished the flame, and put an end to this imminent danger.

The Peloponnesians, upon the failure of this project, marched away part of their army; but continuing the remainder there, raised a wall of circumvallation quite round the city, the troops of every confederate state executing a determinate part of the work. Both inside and outside of this wall was a ditch, and by first digging these they had got materials for brick. This work being completed about the rising of Arcturus, they left some

THE SIEGE OF PLATÆA

of their own men to guard half of the wall, the other half being left to the care of the Boëotians, then marched away with the main army, and dismissed the auxiliary forces of their respective cities. The Plateans had already sent away to Athens their wives, their children, their old people, and all the useless crowd of inhabitants. There were only left in the town during the siege four hundred Plateans, eighty Athenians, and one hundred and ten women to prepare their food. This was the whole number of them when the siege was first formed; nor was there any other person within the wall, either slave or free. And in this manner was the city of Platæa besieged in form. . . .

This winter the Plateans,—for they were still blocked up by the Peloponnesians and Boëotians,—finding themselves much distressed by the failure of their provisions, giving up all hope of succor from the Athenians, and quite destitute of all other means of preservation, formed a project now in concert with those Athenians who were shut up with them in the blockade, “first of all to march out of the town in company, and to compass their escape, if possible, over the works of the enemy.” The authors of this project were Thæanetus, the son of Timedes, a soothsayer, and Eumolpidas, the son of Daimachus, who was one of their commanders. But afterwards, half of the number, affrighted by the greatness of the danger, refused to have a share in the attempt. Yet the remainder, to the number of about two hundred and twenty, resolutely adhered to attempt an escape in the following manner:—

They made ladders equal in height to the enemy’s wall. The measure of this they learned from the rows of

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

brick, where the side of the wall facing them was not covered over with plaster. Several persons were appointed to count the rows at the same time; some of them might probably be wrong, but the greater part would agree in the just computation; especially, as they counted them several times over, and were besides at no great distance, since the part marked out for the design was plainly within their view. In this method, having guessed the measure of a brick from its thickness, they found out what must be the total height for the ladders.

The work of the Peloponnesians was of the following structure: it was composed of two circular walls; one towards Platæa, and the other outward, to prevent any attack from Athens. These walls were at the distance of sixteen feet one from the other; and this intermediate space of sixteen feet was built into distinct lodgments for the guards. These, however, standing thick together, gave to the whole work the appearance of one thick entire wall with battlements on both sides. At every ten battlements were lofty turrets of the same breadth with the whole work, reaching from the face of the inward wall to that of the outward: so that there was no passage by the sides of a turret, but the communication lay open through the middle of them all. By night, when the weather was rainy, they quitted the battlements, and sheltering themselves in the turrets, as near at hand and covered overhead, there they continued their watch. Such was the form of the work by which the Platæans were enclosed on every side.

The enterprising body, when everything was ready, laying hold of the opportunity of a night tempestuous with wind and rain, and further at a dark moon, marched

THE SIEGE OF PLATÆA

out of the place. The persons who had been authors of the project were now the conductors. And first, they passed the ditch which surrounded the town; then they approached quite up to the wall of the enemy, undiscovered by the guards. The darkness of the night prevented their being seen, and the noise they made in approaching was quite drowned in the loudness of the storm. They advanced also at a great distance from one another, to prevent any discovery from the mutual clashing of their arms. They were further armed in the most compact manner, and wore a covering only on the left foot, for the sake of treading firmly in the sand. At one of the intermediate spaces between the turrets they got under the battlements, knowing they were not manned. The bearers of the ladders went first and applied them to the wall. Then twelve light-armed with only a dagger and a breastplate scaled, led by Ammeas the son of Choræbus, who was the first that mounted. His followers, in two parties of six each, mounted next on each side of the turrets. Then others light-armed with javelins succeeded them. Behind came others holding the bucklers of those above them, thus to facilitate their ascent, and to be ready to deliver them into their hands, should they be obliged to charge. When the greater part of the number was mounted, the watchmen within the turrets perceived it. For one of the Platæans, in fastening his hold, had thrown down a tile from off the battlements, which made a noise in the fall; and immediately was shouted an alarm. The whole camp came running towards the wall, yet unable to discover the reason of this alarm, so dark was the night and violent the storm. At this crisis the Platæans, who were left behind in the city, sallied

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

forth and assaulted the work of the Peloponnesians, in the part opposite to that where their friends were attempting to pass, to divert from them as much as possible the attention of the enemy. Great was the confusion of the enemy yet abiding in their posts, for not one durst leave his station to run to the place of alarm, but all were greatly perplexed to guess at its meaning. At last the body of three hundred, appointed for a reserve of succor upon any emergency, marched without the work to the place of alarm. Now the lighted torches, denoting enemies, were held up towards Thebes. On the other side, the Platæans in the city held up at the same time from the wall many of these torches already prepared for this very purpose, that the signals given of the approach of foes might be mistaken by their enemies the Thebans, who judging the affair to be quite otherwise than it really was, might refrain from sending any succor, till their friends who had sallied might have effectuated their escape, and gained a place of security.

In the mean time those of the Platæans, who having mounted first, and by killing the guards had got possession of the turrets on either hand, posted themselves there to secure the passage, and to prevent any manner of obstruction from thence. Applying further their ladder to these turrets from the top of the wall, and causing many of their number to mount, those now upon the turrets kept off the enemies, running to obstruct them both above and below, by discharging their darts; whilst the majority, rearing many ladders at the same time, and throwing down the battlements, got clean over at the intermediate space between the turrets. Every one, in the order he got over to the outward

THE SIEGE OF PLATÆA

side, drew up upon the inner brink of the ditch, and from thence, with their darts and javelins, kept off those who were flocking towards the work to hinder their passage. When all the rest were landed upon the outside of the work, those upon the turrets, coming down last of all and with difficulty, got also to the ditch. By this time the reserve of three hundred was come up to oppose them, by the light of torches. The Platæans by this means, being in the dark, had a clear view of them, and, from their stand upon the brink of the ditch aimed a shower of darts and javelins at those parts of their bodies which had no armor. The Platæans were all obscured, as the glimmering of lights made them less easy to be distinguished; so that the last of their body got the ditch, though not without great difficulty and toil. For the water in it was frozen, not into ice hard enough to bear, but into a watery congelation, the effect not of the northern but eastern blasts. The wind blowing hard had caused so much snow to fall that night that the water was swelled to a height not to be forded without some difficulty. However, the violence of the storm was the greatest furtherance of their escape.

The pass over the ditch being thus completed, the Platæans went forwards in a body, and took the road to Thebes, leaving on their right the temple of Juno, built by Androcrates. They judged it would never be supposed that they had taken a route which led directly towards their enemies; and they saw at the same time the Peloponnesians pursuing with torches along the road to Athens, by Cythæron and the Heads of the Oak. For six or seven stadia, they continued their route towards Thebes, but then turning short, they took the

THE BOY'S BOOK OF BATTLES

road to the mountains by Erythræ and Hysiæ; and having gained the mountain, two hundred and twelve of the number completed their escape to Athens. Some of them, indeed, turned back into the city, without once attempting to get over; and one archer was taken prisoner at the outward ditch.

The Peloponnesians desisted from the fruitless pursuit, and returned to their posts. But the Platæans within the city, ignorant of the real event, and giving ear to the assurances of those who turned back, that "they are all to a man cut off," dispatched a herald, as soon as it was day, to demand a truce for the fetching off the dead; but learning hence the true state of the affair, they remained well satisfied. And in this manner these men of Platæa, by thus forcing a passage, wrought their own preservation. . . .

The Platæans, whose provisions were quite spent, and who could not possibly hold out any longer, were brought to a surrender in the following manner:—

The enemy made an assault upon their wall, which they had not sufficient strength to repel. The Lacedæmonian general being thus convinced of their languid condition, was determined not to take the place by storm. In this he acted pursuant to orders sent him from Lacedæmon, with a view that whenever a peace should be concluded with the Lacedæmonians — one certain condition of which must be reciprocally to restore the places taken in the war — Platæa might not be included in the restitution, as having freely and without compulsion gone over to them. A herald is accordingly dispatched with this demand, "Whether they are willing voluntarily to give up the city to the Lacedæmonians, and

THE SIEGE OF PLATÆA

accept them for their judges who would punish only the guilty, and contrary to forms of justice not even one of those." The herald made this demand aloud. And the Platæans, who were now reduced to excessive weakness, delivered up the city.

The Peloponnesians supplied the Plateans with necessary sustenance for the space of a few days, till the five delegates arrived from Lacedæmon to preside at their trial. And yet, when these were actually come, no judicial process was formed against them. They only called them out, and put this short question to them — "Whether they had done any service to the Lacedæmons and their allies in the present war?" and upon their answering, "No," led them aside, and slew them. Not one of the number did they exempt; so that in this massacre there perished of Platæans not fewer than two hundred, and twenty-five Athenians who had been besieged in their company; and all the women were sold for slaves. The Thebans assigned the city, for the space of a year, to be the residence of certain Megareans, who had been driven from home in the rage of sedition, and to those surviving Platæans who had been friends to the Theban interest. But afterwards they leveled it with the earth, rooted up its whole foundation, and near to Juno's temple erected a spacious inn two hundred feet square, partitioned within both above and below into a range of apartments. In this structure they made use of the roofs and doors that had belonged to the Platæans, and of the other movables found within their houses; of the brass and iron they made beds which they consecrated to Juno, in whose honor they also erected a fane of stone one hundred feet in diameter. The land, being confis-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

cated to public use, was farmed out for ten years, and occupied by Thebans. So much, nay, so totally averse to the Platæans were the Lacedæmonians become; and this, merely to gratify the Thebans, whom they regarded as well able to serve them in the war which was now on foot. And thus was the destruction of Plataea completed in the ninety-third year of its alliance with Athens.

HOW HANNIBAL MADE HIS WAY TO ITALY

[218 B.C.]

BY LIVY

[THE second Punic War broke out in 218 B.C. Hannibal, the Carthaginian general, determined to come down upon Rome from the north. To do this, he was obliged to cross the river Rhone, and then the Alps. The following account pictures his difficulties and how he overcame them.

The Editor.]

HANNIBAL, the other states being pacified by fear or bribes, had now come into the territory of the Volcæ, a powerful nation. They, indeed, dwell on both sides of the Rhone: but doubting that the Carthaginians could be driven from the higher bank, in order that they might have the river as defense, having transported almost all their effects across the Rhone, they occupied in arms the farther bank of the river. Hannibal, by means of presents, persuaded the other inhabitants of the riverside, and some even of the Volcæ themselves, whom their homes had detained, to collect from every quarter and build ships; and they at the same time themselves desired that the army should be transported, and their country relieved, as soon as possible, from the vast multitude of men that burdened it. A great number, therefore, of ships and boats rudely formed for the neighbouring passages, were collected together; and the Gauls, first beginning the plan, hollowed out some new ones from single trees; and then the soldiers themselves, at

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

once induced by the plenty of materials and the easiness of the work, hastily formed shapeless hulks, in which they could transport themselves and their baggage, caring about nothing else, provided they could float and contain their burden.

And now, when all things were sufficiently prepared for crossing, the enemy over against them occupying the whole bank, horse and foot, deterred them. In order to dislodge them, Hannibal orders Hanno, the son of Hamilcar, at the first watch of the night, to proceed with a part of the forces, principally Spanish, one day's journey up the river; and having crossed it where he might first be able, as secretly as possible, to lead round his forces, that when the occasion required, he might attack the enemy in the rear. The Gauls given him as guides for the purpose inform him that about twenty-five miles from thence, the river, spreading round a small island, broader where it was divided, and therefore with a shallower channel, presented a passage. At this place timber was quickly cut down and rafts formed, on which men, horses, and other burdens might be conveyed over. The Spaniards, without making any difficulty, having put their clothes in bags of leather, and themselves leaning on their bucklers placed beneath them, swam across the river. And the rest of the army, after passing on the rafts joined together, and pitching their camp near the river, being fatigued by the journey of the night and the labor of the work, are refreshed by the rest of one day, their leader being anxious to execute his design at a proper season. Setting out next day from this place, they signify by raising a smoke that they had crossed, and were not far distant; which when Hannibal understood,

HOW HANNIBAL MADE HIS WAY TO ITALY

that he might not be wanting on the opportunity, he gives the signal for passing. The infantry already had the boats prepared and fitted; a line of ships higher up transporting the horsemen for the most part near their horses swimming beside them, in order to break the force of the current, rendered the water smooth to the boats crossing below. A great part of the horses were led across swimming, held by bridles from the stern, except those which they put on board saddled and bridled, in order that they might be ready to be used by the rider the moment he disembarked on the strand.

The Gauls ran down to the bank to meet them with various whoopings and songs, according to their custom, shaking their shields above their heads, and brandishing their weapons in their right hands, although such a multitude of ships in front of them alarmed them, together with the loud roaring of the river, and the mingled clamors of the sailors and soldiers, both those who were striving to break through the force of the current, and those who from the other bank were encouraging their comrades on their passage. While sufficiently dismayed by this tumult in front, more terrifying shouts from behind assailed them, their camp having been taken by Hanno; presently he himself came up, and a twofold terror encompassed them, both such a multitude of armed men landing from the ships, and this unexpected army pressing on their rear. When the Gauls, having made a prompt and bold effort to force the enemy, were themselves repulsed, they break through where a way seemed most open, and fly in consternation to their villages around. Hannibal, now despising these tumultuary onsets of the Gauls, having transported the rest of

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

his forces at leisure, pitches his camp. I believe that there were various plans for transporting the elephants; at least there are various accounts of the way in which it was done. Some relate that after the elephants were assembled together on the bank, the fiercest of them being provoked by his keeper, pursued him as he swam across the water, to which he had run for refuge, and drew after him the rest of the herd; the mere force of the stream hurrying them to the other bank, when the bottom had failed each, fearful of the depth. But there is more reason to believe that they were conveyed across on rafts; which plan, as it must have appeared the safer before execution, is after it the more entitled to credit.

Whilst the elephants were conveyed over, Hannibal, in the mean time, had sent five hundred Numidian horsemen towards the camp of the Romans, to observe where and how numerous their forces were, and what they were designing. The three hundred Roman horsemen sent, as was before said, from the mouth of the Rhone, meet this band of cavalry; and a more furious engagement than could be expected from the number of the combatants takes place. For, besides many wounds, the loss on both sides was also nearly equal; and the flight and dismay of the Numidians gave victory to the Romans, now exceedingly fatigued. There fell of the conquerors one hundred and sixty, not all Romans, but partly Gauls: of the vanquished more than two hundred. This commencement, and at the same time omen of the war, as it portended to the Romans a prosperous issue of the whole, so did it also the success of a doubtful and by no means bloodless contest.

HANNIBAL CROSSING THE RHONE

HENRI MOTTE. 1878



HOW HANNIBAL MADE HIS WAY TO ITALY

When, after the action had thus occurred, his own men returned to each general, Scipio could adopt no fixed plan of proceeding, except that he should form his measures from the plans and undertakings of the enemy; and Hannibal, uncertain whether he should pursue the march he had commenced into Italy, or fight with the Roman army which had first presented itself, the arrival of ambassadors from the Boii, and of a petty prince called Magalus, diverted from an immediate engagement; who, declaring that they would be the guides of his journey and the companions of his dangers, gave it as their opinion, that Italy ought to be attacked with the entire force of the war, his strength having been nowhere previously impaired. The troops indeed feared the enemy, the remembrance of the former war not being yet obliterated; but much more did they dread the immense journey and the Alps, a thing formidable by report, particularly to the inexperienced.

Hannibal, therefore, when his own resolution was fixed to proceed in his course in advance on Italy, having summoned an assembly, works upon the minds of the soldiers in various ways, by reproof and exhortation. He said that he wondered what sudden fear had seized breasts ever before undismayed: that through so many years they had made their campaigns with conquest; nor had departed from Spain before all the nations and countries which two opposite seas embrace were subjected to the Carthaginians. That then, indignant that the Romans demanded those, whosoever had besieged Saguntum, to be delivered up to them, as on account of a crime, they had passed the Iberus to blot out the name of the Romans, and to emancipate the world. That

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

then the way seemed long to no one, though they were pursuing it from the setting to the rising of the sun. That now, when they saw by far the greater part of the journey accomplished, the passes of the Pyrenees surmounted, amid the most ferocious nations, the Rhone, that mighty river, crossed, in spite of the opposition of so many thousand Gauls, the fury of the river itself having been overcome, when they had the Alps in sight, the other side of which was Italy, should they halt through weariness at the very gates of the enemy, imagining the Alps to be — what else than lofty mountains? That supposing them to be higher than the summits of the Pyrenees, assuredly no part of the earth reached the sky, nor was insurmountable by mankind. The Alps in fact were inhabited and cultivated, — produced and supported living beings. Were they passable by a few men and impassable to armies? That those very ambassadors whom they saw before them had not crossed the Alps borne aloft through the air on wings; neither were their ancestors indeed natives of the soil, but settling Italy from foreign countries, had often as emigrants safely crossed these very Alps in immense bodies, with their wives and children. To the armed soldier, carrying nothing with him but the instruments of war, what in reality was impervious or insurmountable? That Saguntum might be taken, what dangers, what toils were for eight months undergone! Now, when their aim was Rome, the capital of the world, could anything appear so dangerous or difficult as to delay their undertaking? That the Gauls had formerly gained possession of that very country which the Carthaginians despair of being able to approach. That they must, therefore, either

HOW HANNIBAL MADE HIS WAY TO ITALY

yield in spirit and valor to that nation which they had so often during those times overcome; or look forward, as the end of their journey, to the plain which spreads between the Tiber and the walls of Rome.

He orders them, roused by these exhortations, to refresh themselves and prepare for the journey. Next day, proceeding upward along the bank of the Rhone, he makes for the inland part of Gaul: not because it was the more direct route to the Alps, but believing that the farther he retired from the sea, the Romans would be less in his way; with whom, before he arrived in Italy, he had no intention of engaging. After four days' march he came to the Island: there the streams of the Aar and the Rhone, flowing down from different branches of the Alps, after embracing a pretty large tract of country, flow into one. The name of the Island is given to the plains that lie between them. The Allobroges dwell near, a nation even in those days inferior to none in Gaul in power and fame. They were at that time at variance. Two brothers were contending for the sovereignty. The elder, named Brancus, who had before been king, was driven out by his younger brother and a party of the younger men, who, inferior in right, had more of power. When the decision of this quarrel was most opportunely referred to Hannibal, being appointed arbitrator of the kingdom, he restored the sovereignty to the elder, because such had been the opinion of the Senate and the chief men. In return for this service, he was assisted with a supply of provisions, and plenty of all necessaries, particularly clothing, which the Alps, notorious for extreme cold, rendered necessary to be prepared. After composing the dissensions of the Allobroges, when he

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

now was proceeding to the Alps, he directed his course thither, not by the straight road, but turned to the left into the country of the Tricastini, thence by the extreme boundary of the territory of the Vocontii he proceeded to the Tricorii; his way not being anywhere obstructed till he came to the river Druentia. This stream, also arising amid the Alps, is by far the most difficult to pass of all the rivers in Gaul; for though it rolls down an immense body of water, yet it does not admit of ships; because, being restrained by no banks, and flowing in several and not always the same channels, and continually forming new shallows and new whirlpools (on which account the passage is also uncertain to a person on foot), and rolling down, besides, gravelly stones, it affords no firm or safe passage to those who enter it; and having been at that time swollen by showers, it created great disorder among the soldiers as they crossed, when, in addition to other difficulties, they were of themselves confused by their own hurry and uncertain shouts.

Publius Cornelius the consul, about three days after Hannibal moved from the bank of the Rhone, had come to the camp of the enemy, with his army drawn up in square, intending to make no delay in fighting: but when he saw the fortifications deserted, and that he could not easily come up with them so far in advance before him, he returned to the sea and his fleet, in order more easily and safely to encounter Hannibal when descending from the Alps. But that Spain, the province which he had obtained by lot, might not be destitute of Roman auxiliaries, he sent his brother Cneius Scipio with the principal part of his forces against Hasdrubal, not only to defend the old allies and conciliate new, but also to drive

HOW HANNIBAL MADE HIS WAY TO ITALY

Hasdrubal out of Spain. He himself, with a very small force, returned to Genoa, intending to defend Italy with the army which was around the Po. From the Druentia, by a road that lay principally through plains, Hannibal arrived at the Alps without molestation from the Gauls that inhabit those regions. Then, though the scene had been previously anticipated from report (by which uncertainties are wont to be exaggerated), yet the height of the mountains when viewed so near, and the snows almost mingling with the sky, the shapeless huts situated on the cliffs, the cattle and beasts of burden withered by the cold, the men unshorn and wildly dressed, all things, animate and inanimate, stiffened with frost, and other objects more terrible to be seen than described, renewed their alarm. To them, marching up the first acclivities, the mountaineers appeared occupying the heights overhead; who, if they had occupied the more concealed valleys, might, by rushing out suddenly to the attack, have occasioned great flight and havoc. Hannibal orders them to halt, and having sent forward Gauls to view the ground, when he found there was no passage that way, he pitches his camp in the wildest valley he could find, among places all rugged and precipitous. Then, having learned from the same Gauls, when they had mixed in conversation with the mountaineers, from whom they differed little in language and manners, that the pass was only beset during the day, and that at night each withdrew to his own dwelling, he advanced at the dawn to the heights, as if designing openly and by day to force his way through the defile. The day then being passed in feigning a different attempt from that which was in preparation, when they had fortified the camp in

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

the same place where they had halted, as soon as he perceived that the mountaineers had descended from the heights, and that the guards were withdrawn, having lighted for show a greater number of fires than was proportioned to the number that remained, and having left the baggage in the camp, with the cavalry and the principal part of the infantry, he himself with a party of light-armed, consisting of all the most courageous of his troops, rapidly cleared the defile, and took post on those very heights which the enemy had occupied.

At dawn of light the next day the camp broke up, and the rest of the army began to move forward. The mountaineers, on a signal being given, were now assembling from their forts to their usual station, when they suddenly beheld part of the enemy overhanging them from above, in possession of their former position, and the others passing along the road. Both these objects, presented at the same time to the eye and the mind, made them stand motionless for a little while; but when they afterwards saw the confusion in the pass, and that the marching body was thrown into disorder by the tumult which itself created, principally from the horses being terrified, thinking that whatever terror they added would suffice for the destruction of the enemy, they scramble along the dangerous rocks, as being accustomed alike to pathless and circuitous ways. Then, indeed, the Carthaginians were opposed at once by the enemy and by the difficulties of the ground; and each striving to escape first from the danger, there was more fighting among themselves than with their opponents. The horses in particular created danger in the lines, which, being terrified by the discordant clamors which

HOW HANNIBAL MADE HIS WAY TO ITALY

the groves and reëchoing valleys augmented, fell into confusion; and if by chance struck or wounded, they were so dismayed that they occasioned a great loss both of men and baggage of every description: and as the pass on both sides was broken and precipitous, this tumult threw many down to an immense depth, some even of the armed men; but the beasts of burden, with their loads, were rolled down like the fall of some vast fabric. Though these disasters were shocking to view, Hannibal, however, kept his place for a little, and kept his men together, lest he might augment the tumult and disorder; but afterwards, when he saw the line broken and that there was danger that he should bring over his army, preserved to no purpose if deprived of their baggage, he hastened down from the higher ground; and though he had routed the enemy by the first onset alone, he at the same time increased the disorder in his own army: but that tumult was composed in a moment, after the roads were cleared by the flight of the mountaineers; and presently the whole army was conducted through, not only without being disturbed, but almost in silence. He then took a fortified place, which was the capital of that district, and the little villages that lay around it, and fed his army for three days with the corn and cattle he had taken; and during these three days, as the soldiers were neither obstructed by the mountaineers, who had been daunted by the first engagement, nor yet much by the ground, he made considerable way.

He then came to another state, abounding, for a mountainous country, with inhabitants; where he was nearly overcome, not by open war, but by his own arts of treachery and ambuscade. Some old men, governors

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

of forts, came as deputies to the Carthaginian, professing, "that having been warned by the useful example of the calamities of others, they wished rather to experience the friendship than the hostilities of the Carthaginians: they would, therefore, obediently execute his commands, and begged that he would accept of a supply of provisions, guides of his march, and hostages for the sincerity of their promises." Hannibal, when he had answered them in a friendly manner, thinking that they should neither be rashly trusted nor yet rejected, lest if repulsed they might become enemies, having received the hostages whom they proffered, and made use of the provisions which they of their own accord brought down to the road, follows their guides, by no means as among a people with whom he was at peace, but with his line of march in close order. The elephants and cavalry formed the van of the marching body; he himself, examining everything around, and intent on every circumstance, followed with the choicest of the infantry. When they came into a narrower pass, lying on one side beneath an overhanging eminence, the barbarians, rising at once on all sides from their ambush, assail them in front and rear, both at close quarters, and from a distance, and roll down huge stones on the army. The most numerous body of men pressed on the rear; against whom the infantry, facing about and directing their attack, made it very obvious that had not the rear of the army been well supported, a great loss must have been sustained in that pass. Even as it was they came to the extremity of danger, and almost to destruction: for while Hannibal hesitates to lead down his division into the defile, because, though he himself was a protec-

HOW HANNIBAL MADE HIS WAY TO ITALY

tion to the cavalry, he had not in the same way left any aid to the infantry in the rear; the mountaineers, charging obliquely, and on having broken through the middle of the army, took possession of the road; and one night was spent by Hannibal without his cavalry and baggage.

Next day, the barbarians running in to the attack between [the two divisions] less vigorously, the forces were reunited, and the defile passed, not without loss, but yet with a greater destruction of beasts of burden than of men. From that time the mountaineers fell upon them in smaller parties, more like an attack of robbers than war, sometimes on the van, sometimes on the rear, according as the ground afforded them advantage, or stragglers advancing or loitering gave them an opportunity. Though the elephants were driven through steep and narrow roads with great loss of time, yet wherever they went they rendered the army safe from the enemy, because men unacquainted with such animals were afraid of approaching too nearly. On the ninth day they came to a summit of the Alps, chiefly through places trackless; and after many mistakes of their way, which were caused either by the treachery of the guides, or, when they were not trusted, by entering valleys at random, on their own conjectures of the route. For two days they remained encamped on the summit; and rest was given to the soldiers, exhausted with toil and fighting: and several beasts of burden, which had fallen down among the rocks, by following the track of the army arrived at the camp. A fall of snow, it being now the season for the setting of the constellation of the Pleiades, caused great fear to the soldiers, already worn out with weariness of so many hardships. On the stand-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

ards being moved forward at daybreak, when the army proceeded slowly over all places entirely blocked up with snow, and languor and despair strongly appeared in the countenances of all, Hannibal, having advanced before the standards, and ordered the soldiers to halt on a certain eminence, whence there was a prospect far and wide, points out to them Italy and the plains of the Po, extending themselves beneath the Alpine mountains; and said, "that they were now surmounting not only the ramparts of Italy, but also of the city of Rome; that the rest of the journey would be smooth and down-hill; that after one, or, at most, a second battle, they would have the citadel and capital of Italy in their own power and possession." The army then began to advance, the enemy now making no attempts beyond petty thefts, as opportunity offered. But the journey proved much more difficult than it had been in the ascent, as the declivity of the Alps being generally shorter on the side of Italy is consequently steeper; for nearly all the road was precipitous, narrow, and slippery, so that neither those who made the least stumble could prevent themselves from falling, nor, when fallen, remain in the same place, but rolled, both men and beasts of burden, one upon another.

They then came to a rock much more narrow, and formed of such perpendicular ledges, that a light-armed soldier, carefully making the attempt, and clinging with his hands to the bushes and roots around, could with difficulty lower himself. The ground, even before very steep by nature, had been broken by a recent falling away of the earth into a precipice of nearly a thousand feet in depth. Here when the cavalry had halted,

HOW HANNIBAL MADE HIS WAY TO ITALY

as if at the end of their journey, it is announced to Hannibal, wondering what obstructed the march, that the rock was impassable. Having then gone himself to view the place, it seemed clear to him that he must lead his army round it, by however great a circuit, through the pathless and untrodden regions around. But this route also proved impracticable; for while the new snow of a moderate depth remained on the old, which had not been removed, their footsteps were planted with ease as they walked upon the new snow, which was soft and not too deep; but when it was dissolved by the trampling of so many men and beasts of burden, they then walked on the bare ice below, and through the dirty fluid formed by the melting snow. Here there was a wretched struggle, both on account of the slippery ice not affording any hold to the step, and giving way beneath the foot more readily by reason of the slope; and whether they assisted themselves in rising by their hands or their knees, their supports themselves giving way, they would tumble again; nor were there any stumps or roots near, by pressing against which, one might with hand or foot support himself; so that they only floundered on the smooth ice and amid the melted snow. The beasts of burden sometimes also cut into this lower ice by merely treading upon it; at others they broke it completely through, by the violence with which they struck in their hoofs in their struggling, so that most of them, as if taken in a trap, stuck in the hardened and deeply frozen ice.

At length, after the men and beasts of burden had been fatigued to no purpose, the camp was pitched on the summit, the ground being cleared for that purpose with great difficulty, so much snow was there to be dug

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

out and carried away. The soldiers being then set to make a way down the cliff, by which alone a passage could be effected, and it being necessary that they should cut through the rocks, having felled and lopped a number of large trees which grew around, they make a huge pile of timber; and as soon as a strong wind fit for exciting the flames arose, they set fire to it, and, pouring vinegar on the heated stones, they render them soft and crumbling. They then open a way with iron instruments through the rock thus heated by the fire, and soften its declivities by gentle windings, so that not only the beasts of burden, but also the elephants could be led down it. Four days were spent about this rock, the beasts nearly perishing through hunger: for the summits of the mountains are for the most part bare, and if there is any pasture the snows bury it. The lower parts contain valleys, and some sunny hills, and rivulets flowing beside woods, and scenes more worthy of the abode of man. There the beasts of burden were sent out to pasture, and rest given for three days to the men, fatigued with forming the passage; they then descended into the plains, the country and the dispositions of the inhabitants being now less rugged.

JULIUS CÆSAR IN GAUL

BY T. RICE HOLMES

I

A BATTLE WITH THE GERMANS

[58 B.C.]

[THE Helvetians of Switzerland left their homes for the wider and more fertile fields of Gaul; but were overcome and driven back by Julius Cæsar. Many of the Gallic chiefs came to congratulate the conqueror. Among them were certain leaders of the Æduans, who now appealed to him for aid. The Sequani, they said, had asked the German tribes called Suevi to come and help them against the Æduans. The Suevi, or Suebi, had come and had conquered both Æduans and Sequani. Ariovistus, the Suevi leader, was a blood-thirsty tyrant, and was treating them with the utmost cruelty. Would not the great commander Julius Cæsar free them from his abuse? Cæsar was more than ready to grant their request. The Æduans were allies of the Romans, and therefore he was bound to give help. Moreover, if the Germans should overrun Gaul, their next step would be into Italy. It was absolutely necessary for him to suppress Ariovistus. An interesting point of this selection is that the scene is laid in a region that is again [1914] witnessing the conflict of Teuton and Gaul.

The Editor.]

AT the hour of the night on which he had fixed, Cæsar struck his camp. He left a detachment to hold Vesontio. Before him all was unknown: but he had full faith in Diviciacus; and Diviciacus undertook to be his guide. To avoid the broken wooded country between Besançon and Montbéliard, he made a circuit northward and

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

eastward, of about fifty miles, and then, threading the pass of Belfort, debouched into the plain of the Rhine, and pushed on rapidly past the eastern slopes of the Vosges till he reached a point within twenty-two miles of the German encampment. He has not told us where he formed his own camp: probably it was on the river Fecht, between Ostheim and Gemar.

On the same day Ariovistus marched southward, and halted about six miles north of Cæsar's camp, at the very foot of the Vosges. He had conceived a daring plan. Next morning his column ascended the lower slopes, marched securely along them past the Roman army, and took up a position two miles south of Cæsar's camp. As he looked up at the huge column winding leisurely by, Cæsar saw that he was being outmaneuvered: to send the legions up the hillside would be to court destruction, and he could only wait, a passive spectator, while Ariovistus was cutting his communications and barring up the road by which he expected his supplies.

Next day Cæsar formed up his army immediately in front of the camp, under the protection of his artillery. Ariovistus might attack if he liked: but if he attacked, it would be at his peril; if he declined the challenge, the legionaries would be assured that the Germans were not invincible. Ariovistus remained where he was. On each of the four following days Cæsar offered battle; but the enemy would not be provoked into leaving their camp. Cavalry skirmishes indeed took place daily, but without any decisive results. The Germans had light-armed active footmen, who accompanied the cavalry into action, each one of them selected by the rider

JULIUS CÆSAR IN GAUL

whom he attended: they were trained to run by the horses' sides, holding on to their manes; and if the troopers were forced to retreat, they supported them and protected the wounded. As the infantry remained obstinately in their camp, and it was necessary for Cæsar to win back communication with his convoys, he resolved to take the initiative. Forming his legions in three parallel columns, prepared, at a moment's notice, to face into line of battle, he marched back to a point about a thousand yards south of Ariovistus's position, and there marked out a site for a camp. One column fell to work with their spades, while the other two formed in two lines to protect them. Ariovistus sent a detachment to stop the work; but it was too late: the fighting legions kept their assailants at bay, and the camp was made. Two legions with a corps of auxiliaries were left to hold it; and the other four returned to the larger camp. Next day Cæsar led his men into the open, but not far from his camp, and again offered battle. Ariovistus again declined the challenge; but, as soon as the legions had returned to their intrenchments, he made a determined effort to storm the smaller camp, and only drew off his forces at sunset. The Romans had suffered as heavily as the Germans; but Cæsar now learned from prisoners that the enemy had been warned by their wise women, whose divinations they accepted with superstitious awe, that they could not gain the victory unless they postponed the battle until after the new moon.

Cæsar saw his opportunity. He waited till the following morning; and then, leaving detachments to guard his two camps, he formed his six legions, as usual, in

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

three lines, and marched against the enemy. They had no choice but to defend themselves. Their wagons stood in a huge semicircle, closing their flanks and rear; and, as they tramped out, their women stretched out their hands and piteously begged them not to suffer their wives to be made slaves. The host was formed in seven distinct groups, each composed of the warriors of a single tribe. As the Romans were numerically weaker than their opponents, the auxiliaries were drawn up in front of the smaller camp, to make a show of strength. Each of the *legati* was placed at the head of a legion, in order that every one might feel that his courage in action would not be overlooked. Cæsar commanded the right wing in person, and, noticing that the enemy's left was comparatively weak, directed against it his principal attack, in the hope of overwhelming it speedily and thus disconcerting the rest of the force. But before the Romans in the front ranks could poise their javelins, the Germans were upon them; and they had barely a moment to draw their swords. Quickly stiffening into compact masses, the Germans locked their shields to receive the thrusts: but some of the Romans flung themselves right on to the phalanxes; they tore the shields from the grasp of their foes, and dug their swords down into them; and, after a close struggle, they broke the formation, and their weapons got freer play. The unwieldy masses, unable to maneuver or to deploy, reeled backward, dissolved, and fled. But the Roman left, overpowered by numbers, was giving ground. Young Publius Crassus, son of the celebrated triumvir, who was stationed in command of the cavalry, outside the battle, saw the crisis, and promptly sent the third line to the

JULIUS CÆSAR IN GAUL

rescue. The victory was won, and the whole beaten multitude fled towards the Rhine. But the Rhine was some fifteen miles away; the Ill had first to be crossed; and in that weary flight many fell under the lances of the cavalry.)

II

BESIEGING A ROMAN CAMP

[54 B.C.]

[WHENEVER a Roman army made a halt, if for only one night, their camp was always carefully fortified with trench, rampart, and palisade. It was such a camp as this that was attacked by Ambiorix. He had been successful in a previous engagement, and now he induced the Atuatuci and the Nervii to join him in another venture. The Roman leader, Quintus Cicero, was a brother of the orator Cicero.

In substance, these accounts are taken from the narrative of Cæsar.

The Editor.]

AMBIORIX told the chiefs exultingly of his success. Here was such a chance as they might never have again. Cicero's camp was close by. Why should they not do as he had done,—swoop down upon the solitary legion, win back their independence for good, and take a glorious revenge upon their persecutors? The chiefs caught at the suggestion. The small tribes that owned their sway flocked to join them: the Eburones, flushed with victory, were there to help; and the united host set out with eager confidence for the Roman camp. Their horsemen, hurrying on ahead, cut off a party of soldiers who were felling wood. Not the faintest rumor of the late disaster had reached Cicero; and the Gallic hordes burst upon him like a bolt from the sky. Their first on-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

slaught was so violent that even the disciplined courage of the Romans barely averted destruction. Messengers were instantly dispatched to carry the news to Cæsar; and Cicero promised to reward them well if they should succeed in delivering his letters. Working all night with incessant energy, the legionaries erected a large number of wooden towers on the rampart, and made good the defects in the fortifications. The Gauls, who meanwhile had been strongly reinforced, returned in the morning to the attack. They succeeded in filling up the trench; but the garrison still managed to keep them at bay.

Day after day the siege continued; and night after night and all night long the Romans toiled to make ready for the morrow's struggle. The towers were furnished with stories and embattled breastworks of wattle-work: sharp stakes, burnt and hardened at the ends, were prepared for hurling at the besiegers, and huge pikes for stopping their rush if they should attempt an assault. Even the sick and the wounded had to lend a hand. Cicero himself was in poor health, but he worked night and day; and it was not till the men gathered round him and insisted on his sparing himself, that he would take a little rest. His complaints, his Epicurean studies, his abortive tragedies were forgotten; he remembered only that he was a Roman general. Meanwhile the Nervian leaders, who had expected an easy triumph, were becoming impatient. They asked Cicero to grant them an interview. Some of them knew him personally; and they doubtless hoped that he would prove compliant. They assailed him with the same arguments that Ambiorix had found so successful with Sabinus. They tried to frighten him by describing the massacre

JULIUS CÆSAR IN GAUL

at Atuatuca, and assured him that it was idle to hope for relief. But they would not be hard upon him. All that they wanted was to stop the inveterate custom of quartering the legions for the winter in Gaul. If he and his army would only go, they might go in peace whithersoever they pleased. Cicero calmly replied that Romans never accepted terms from an armed enemy. They must first lay down their arms: then he would intercede for them with Cæsar; Cæsar was always just, and would doubtless grant their petition.

Disappointed though they were, the Gauls were not disheartened. They determined to invest the camp in a scientific manner. From the experience of past campaigns they had got a rough idea of the nature of Roman siege works; and now, with the quickness of their race, they proceeded to imitate them. Some prisoners who had fallen into their hands gave them hints. Having no proper tools, they were obliged to cut the turf with their swords, and to use their hands and even their cloaks in piling the sod; but the workers swarmed in such prodigious numbers that in three hours they had thrown up a rampart, ten feet high and nearly three miles in extent. They then proceeded, under the guidance of the prisoners, to erect towers, and to make sappers' huts, ladders, and poles fitted with hooks for tearing down the rampart of the camp. The huts, which were intended to protect the men who had to fill up the trench and demolish the rampart, were partially closed in front, and had sloping roofs, built of strong timbers, so as to resist the crash of any stones which might be pitched on to them, and were probably covered with clay and raw-hides, as a protection against fire. On the seventh day

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

of the siege there was a great gale. The besiegers took advantage of it to fling blazing darts and white-hot balls of clay, which lighted on the straw thatch of the men's huts; and the wind-swept flames flew all over the inclosure. With a yell of exultation, the enemy wheeled forward their towers and huts, and planted their ladders: in another moment they were swarming up: but all along the rampart, their dark figures outlined against the fiery background, the Romans were standing ready to hurl them down: harassed by showers of missiles, half scorched by the fierce heat, regardless of the havoc that the flames were making in their property, every man of them stood firm; and hardly one so much as looked behind. Their losses were heavier than on any previous day. The Gauls, too, went down in scores; for those in front could not retreat because of the masses that pressed upon them from behind. In one spot a tower was wheeled right up to the rampart. The centurions of the Third Cohort coolly withdrew their men, and with voice and gesture dared the Gauls to come on: but none dared to stir a step: a shower of stones sent them flying; and the deserted tower was set on fire. Everywhere the result was the same. The assailants were the bravest of the Gauls: of death they had no fear: but they had not the heart to hurl themselves upon that living wall; and, leaving their slain in heaps, they sullenly withdrew.

Still the siege went on; and to the wearied and weakened legion its trials daily increased. Letters for Cæsar were sent out in more and more rapid succession. Some of the messengers were caught in sight of the garrison, and tortured to death. There was, however, in the

JULIUS CÆSAR IN GAUL

camp a Nervian named Vertico, who, just before the siege, had thrown himself upon the protection of Cicero, and had been steadfastly true to him. By lavish promises he induced one of his slaves to face the dangers which to the Roman messengers had proved fatal. The letter which he had to carry was fastened to a javelin and concealed by the lashing. He passed his countrymen unnoticed, made his way safely to Samarobriva, and delivered his dispatch. None of the other messengers had arrived; and so close was the sympathy between the peasants and the insurgents that Cæsar had not heard a rumor of the siege. . . .

Everything now depended upon speed. Passing through the Nervian territory, Cæsar learned from some peasants who fell into his hands that Cicero's situation was all but desperate: immediately he wrote a letter in Greek characters assuring him of speedy relief, and offered one of his Gallic horsemen a large reward to deliver it. He told him, in case he should not be able to get into the camp, to tie the letter to the thong of a javelin and throw it inside. Dreading the risk of apprehension, the man did as Cæsar had directed; but the javelin stuck in one of the towers, and remained unnoticed for two days. A soldier then found it and took it to Cicero, who read the letter to his exhausted troops. As they gazed over the rampart, they saw clouds of smoke floating far away over the west horizon, and knew that Cæsar was approaching and taking vengeance as he came.

That night Cæsar received a dispatch from Cicero, warning him that the Gauls had raised the siege, and had gone off to intercept him. Notwithstanding their

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

heavy losses, they numbered, it was said, some sixty thousand men. Cæsar made known the contents of the dispatch to the troops, and encouraged them to nerve themselves for the approaching struggle. A short march in the early morning brought the legions to a rivulet, running through a broad valley, beyond which the enemy were encamped. Cæsar had no intention of fighting a battle against such heavy odds on unfavorable ground. Cicero was in no danger; and he was therefore not pressed for time. He sent out scouts to look for a convenient place to cross the river. Meanwhile he marked out his camp on a slope, and constructed it on the smallest possible scale in the hope of seducing the enemy to attack him. But the enemy were expecting reinforcements, and remained where they were. At dawn their horsemen ventured across the river, and attacked Cæsar's cavalry, who promptly retreated in obedience to orders. Sitting on their horses, the Gauls could see inside the camp. An attempt was apparently being made to increase the height of the rampart, and to block the gateways. There was every appearance of panic. Cæsar had told his men what to do; and they were hurrying about the camp with a pretense of nervous trepidation. The enemy hesitated no longer; and in a short time they were all across the stream. They had to attack uphill; but that mattered nothing against such craven adversaries. Not even a sentry was standing on the rampart. Criers were sent round the camp to say that if any man cared to come out and join the Gauls, he would be welcome, — till eight o'clock. The gates looked too strong to be forced, though there was really only a mock barricade of sods, which could be

JULIUS CÆSAR IN GAUL

knocked over in a moment. The Gauls walked right up to the ditch, and began coolly filling it up, and actually tearing down the rampart with their hands,—when from right and left and front the cohorts charged: there was a thunder of hoofs; and reeling backward in amazement before a rush of cavalry, they flung away their arms and fled.

Cæsar prudently stopped the pursuit, lest his troops should become entangled in the outlying woods and marches; but about three o'clock that afternoon the legions reached Cicero's camp without the loss of a man. With keen interest Cæsar asked for details of the siege, and gazed with admiring wonder at the enemy's deserted works. When the legion was paraded, he found that not one man in ten was unwounded. Turning to Cicero, he heartily thanked him for the magnificent stand which he had made, and then, calling out, one by one, the officers whom he mentioned as having shown especial bravery, he addressed to them a few words of praise.

A VIKING SEA FIGHT

FROM THE HEIMSKRINGLA

The Danish king, Svend Forked Beard, was married to Sigrid the Haughty. Sigrid was King Olaf Tryggvason's greatest enemy; the cause of which was that King Olaf had broken off with her, and had struck her in the face. She urged King Svend much to give battle to King Olaf Tryggvason; saying that he had reason enough, as Olaf had married his sister Thyri without his leave, "and that your predecessors would not have submitted to." Such persuasions Sigrid had often in her mouth; and at last she brought it so far that Svend resolved firmly on doing so.

Early in spring King Svend sent messengers eastward into Sweden, to his brother-in-law Olaf, the Swedish king, and to Earl Eric; and informed them that King Olaf of Norway was levying men for an expedition, and intended in summer to go to Vendland. To this news the Danish king added an invitation to the Swedish king and Earl Eric to meet King Svend with an army, so that all together they might make an attack on King Olaf Tryggvason.

The Swedish king and Earl Eric were ready enough for this, and immediately assembled a great fleet and an army through all Sweden, with which they sailed southwards to Denmark, and arrived there before King

A VIKING SEA FIGHT

Olaf Tryggvason had sailed to the eastward. Haldor the Unchristian tells of this in his lay on Earl Eric: —

“The king-subduer raised a host
Of warriors on the Swedish coast.
The brave went southwards to the fight,
Who love the sword-storm’s gleaming light;
The brave, who fill the wild wolf’s mouth,
Followed bold Eric to the south;
The brave, who sport in blood — each one
With the bold earl to sea is gone.”

The Swedish king and Earl Eric sailed to meet the Danish king, and they had all when together an immense force.

At the same time that Earl Svend sent a message to Sweden for an army, he sent Earl Sigvald to Vendland to spy out King Olaf Tryggvason’s proceedings, and to bring it about by cunning devices that King Svend and King Olaf should fall in with each other. So Sigvald sets out to go to Vendland. First, he came to Jomsburg, and then he sought out King Olaf Tryggvason. There was much friendship in their conversation, and the earl got himself into great favor with the king. Astrid, the earl’s wife, King Burislaf’s daughter, was a great friend of King Olaf Tryggvason, particularly on account of the connection which had been between them when Olaf was married to her sister Geira.

Earl Sigvald was a prudent, ready-minded man; and as he had got a voice in King Olaf’s council, he put him off much from sailing homewards, finding various reasons for delay. Olaf’s people were in the highest degree dissatisfied with this; for the men were anxious to get home, and they lay ready to sail, waiting only for a wind. At last Earl Sigvald got a secret message from

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Denmark that the Swedish king's army was arrived from the east, and that Earl Eric's was also ready; and that all these chiefs had resolved to sail eastwards to Vendland, and wait for King Olaf at an island which is called Svald. They also desired the earl to contrive matters so that they should meet King Olaf there.

There came first a flying report to Vendland that the Danish king, Svend, had fitted out an army; and it was soon whispered that he intended to attack King Olaf. But Earl Sigvald says to King Olaf, "It never can be King Svend's intention to venture with the Danish force alone to give battle to thee with such a powerful army, but if thou hast any suspicion that evil is on foot, I will follow thee with my force [at that time it was considered a great matter to have Jomsburg vikings with an army], and I will give thee eleven manned ships."

The king accepted this offer; and as the light breeze of wind that came was favorable, he ordered the ships to get under weigh, and the war-horns to sound the departure. The sails were hoisted; and all the small vessels, sailing fastest, got out to sea before the others. The earl, who sailed nearest to the king's ship, called to those on board to tell the king to sail in his keel-tracks: "For I know where the water is deepest between the islands and in the sounds, and these large ships require the deepest." Then the earl sailed first with his eleven ships, and the king followed with his large ships, also eleven in number; but the whole of the rest of the fleet sailed out to sea. Now when Earl Sigvald came sailing close under the island Svald, a skiff rowed out to inform the earl that the Danish king's

A VIKING SEA FIGHT

army was lying in the harbor before them. Then the earl ordered the sails of his vessels to be struck, and they rowed in under the island. Haldor the Unchristian says:—

“From out the south bold Tryggve’s son
With one-and-seventy ships came on,
To dye his sword in bloody fight,
Against the Danish foeman’s might.
But the false earl the king betrayed;
And treacherous Sigvald, it is said,
Deserted from King Olaf’s fleet,
And basely fled, the Danes to meet.”

It is said here that King Olaf and Earl Sigvald had seventy sail of vessels and one more, when they sailed from the south.

The Danish king Svend, the Swedish king Olaf, and Earl Eric were there with all their forces. The weather being fine, and clear sunshine, all these chiefs, with a great suite, went out on the isle to see the vessels sailing out at sea, and many of them crowded together; and they saw among them one large and glancing ship. The two kings said, “That is a large and very beautiful vessel: that will be the Long Serpent.”

Earl Eric replied, —

“That is not the Long Serpent.” And he was right; for it was a ship belonging to Endric of Grimsar.

Soon after they saw another vessel coming sailing along much larger than the first; then says King Svend, —

“Olaf Tryggvason must be afraid, for he does not venture to sail with the figure-head of the dragon upon his ship.”

Says Earl Eric, —

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

"That is not the king's ship yet; for I know that ship by the colored stripes of cloth in her sail. That is Erling Skialgsson. Let him sail; for it is better for us that this ship is away from Olaf's fleet, so well equipped as she is."

Soon after they saw and knew Earl Sigvald's ships, which turned in and laid themselves under the island. Then they saw three ships coming along under sail, and one of them very large. King Svend ordered his men to go to their ships, "for there comes the Long Serpent."

Earl Eric says, —

"Many other great and stately vessels have they besides the Long Serpent. Let us wait a little."

Then said many, —

"Earl Eric will not fight and avenge his father; and it is a shame that it should be told that we lay here with so great a force, and allowed King Olaf to sail out to sea before our eyes."

But when they had spoken thus for a short time, they saw four ships come sailing along, of which one had a large dragon-head richly gilt. Then King Svend stood up, and said, —

"That dragon shall carry me this evening high, for I shall steer it."

Then said many, —

"The Serpent is indeed a wonderfully large and beautiful vessel, and it shows a great mind to have built such a ship."

Earl Eric said so loud that several persons heard him,

"If King Olaf had no other vessels but only that one, King Svend would never take it from him with the Danish force alone."

A VIKING SEA FIGHT

Thereafter all the people rushed on board their ships, took down the tents, and in all haste made ready for battle.

While the chiefs were speaking among themselves, as above related, they saw three very large ships coming sailing along, and at last after them a fourth, and that was the Long Serpent. Of the large ships which had gone before, and which they had taken for the Long Serpent, the first was the Crane; the one after that was the Short Serpent; and when they really saw the Long Serpent all knew, and nobody had a word to say against it, that it must be Olaf Tryggvason who was sailing in such a vessel; and they went to their ships to arm for the fight.

An agreement had been concluded among the chiefs, King Svend, King Olaf the Swede, and Earl Eric, that they should divide Norway among them in three parts, in case they succeeded against Olaf Tryggvason; but that he of the chiefs who should first board the Serpent should have her and all the booty found in her, and each should have the ships he cleared for himself. Earl Eric had a large ship of war which he used upon his viking expeditions; and there was an iron beard or comb above on both sides of the stem, and below it a thick iron plate as broad as the combs, which went down quite to the gunwale.

When Earl Sigvald with his vessels rowed in under the island, Thorkel Dyrdil of the Crane, and the other ship commanders who sailed with him, saw that he turned his ships towards the isle, and thereupon let fall the sails, and rowed after him, calling out, and asking why he sailed that way. The earl answered, that he was

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

waiting for King Olaf, as he feared there were enemies in the way. They lay upon their oars until Thorkel Nefia came up with the Short Serpent and the three ships which followed him. When they told them the same, they too struck sail, and let the ships drive, waiting for King Olaf. But when the king sailed in towards the isle, the whole enemies' fleet came rowing within them out to the Sound. When they saw this, they begged the king to hold on his way, and not risk battle with so great a force. The king replied, high on the quarterdeck where he stood, "Strike the sails; never shall men of mine think of flight. I never fled from battle. Let God dispose of my life, but flight I shall never take." It was done as the king commanded. Halfred tells of it thus:—

"And far and wide the saying bold
Of the brave warrior shall be told.
The king, in many a fray well tried,
To his brave champions round him cried,
‘My men shall never learn from me
From the dark weapon-cloud to flee.’
Nor were the brave words spoken then
Forgotten by his faithful men."

King Olaf ordered the war-horns to sound for all his ships to close up to each other. The king's ship lay in the middle of the line, and on one side lay the Short Serpent, and on the other the Crane; and as they made fast the stems together, the Long Serpent's stem and the Short Serpent's were fast together; but when the king saw it he called out to his men, and ordered them to lay the larger ship more in advance, so that its stern should not lie so far behind in the fleet.

Then says Ulf the Red,—

A VIKING SEA FIGHT

"If the Long Serpent is to lie as much more ahead of the other ships as she is longer than they, we shall have hard work of it here on the forecastle."

The king replies, —

"I did not think I had a forecastle man afraid as well as red."¹

Says Ulf, —

"Defend thou the quarterdeck as I shall the forecastle."

The king had a bow in his hands, and laid an arrow on the string, and aimed at Ulf.

Ulf said, —

"Shoot another way, king, where it is more needful: my work is thy gain."

King Olaf stood on the Serpent's quarterdeck, high over the others. He had a gilt shield, and a helmet inlaid with gold; over his armor he had a short red coat, and was easy to be distinguished from other men. When King Olaf saw that the scattered forces of the enemy gathered themselves together under the banners of their ships, he asked, —

"Who is the chief of the force right opposite to us?"

He was answered that it was King Svend with the Danish army.

The king replies, —

"We are not afraid of these soft Danes, for there is no bravery in them; but who are the troops on the right of the Danes?"

He was answered that it was King Olaf with the Swedish forces.

"Better it were," says King Olaf, "for these Swedes

¹ Ragan oc Raudan.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

to be sitting at home killing their sacrifices, than to be venturing under our weapons from the Long Serpent. But who owns the large ships on the larboard side of the Danes?"

"That is Earl Eric Hakonson," say they.

The king replies, —

"He, methinks, has good reason for meeting us; and we may expect the sharpest conflict with these men, for they are Norsemen like ourselves."

The kings now laid out their oars, and prepared to attack. King Svend laid his ship against the Long Serpent. Outside of him Olaf the Swede laid himself, and set his ship's stem against the outermost ship of King Olaf's line; and on the other side lay Earl Eric. Then a hard combat began. Earl Sigvald held back with the oars on his ships, and did not join the fray. So says Scald Thorsteinson, who at that time was with Earl Eric: —

"I followed Sigvald in my youth,
And gallant Eric; and in truth,
Tho' now I am growing stiff and old,
In the spear-song I once was bold.
Where arrows whistled on the shore
Of Swalder fiord my shield I bore,
And stood amidst the loudest clash
When swords on shields made fearful crash."

And Halfred also sings thus: —

"In truth, I think the gallant king,
Midst such a foeman's gathering,
Would be the better of some score
Of his tight Drontheim lads, or more;
For many a chief has run away,
And left our brave king in the fray,
Two great kings' power to withstand,
And one great earl's, with his small band.

A VIKING SEA FIGHT

The king who dares such mighty deed
A hero for his scald would need."

This battle was one of the severest told of, and many were the people slain. The forecastle men of the Long Serpent, the Short Serpent, and the Crane, threw grapplings and stem chains into King Svend's ship, and used their weapons well against the people standing below them, for they cleared the decks of all the ships they could lay fast hold of; and King Svend, and all the men who escaped, fled to other vessels, and laid themselves out of bow-shot. It went with this force just as King Olaf Tryggvason had foreseen. Then King Olaf the Swede laid himself in their place; but when he came near the great ships it went with him as with them, for he lost many men and some ships, and was obliged to get away. But Earl Eric laid the Iron Beard side by side with the outermost of King Olaf's ships, thinned it of men, cut the cables, and let it drive. Then he lay alongside of the next, and fought until he had cleared it of men also. Now all the people who were in the smaller ships began to run into the larger, and the earl cut them loose as fast as he cleared them of men. The Danes and Swedes laid themselves now out of shooting distance all around Olaf's ship; but Earl Eric lay always close alongside of the ships, and used his swords and battle-axes, and as fast as people fell in his vessel others, Danes and Swedes, came in their place. So says Haldor: —

"Sharp was the clang of shield and sword,
And shrill the song of spears on board,
And whistling arrows thickly flew
Against the Serpent's gallant crew.
And still fresh foemen, it is said,
Earl Eric to her long side led;

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Whole armies of his Danes and Swedes,
Wielding on high their blue sword-blades."

Then the fight became most severe, and many people fell. But at last it came to this, that all King Olaf Tryggvason's ships were cleared of men except the Long Serpent, on board of which all who could still carry their arms were gathered. Then Iron Beard lay side by side with the Serpent, and the fight went on with battle-axe and sword. So says Haldor:—

"Hard pressed on every side by foes,
The Serpent reels beneath the blows;
Crash go the shields around the bow.
Breast-plates and breasts pierced thro' and thro'!
In the sword-storm the Holm beside,
The Iron Beard lay alongside
The king's Long Serpent of the sea —
Fate gave the earl the victory."

Earl Eric was in the forehold of his ship, where a cover of shields had been set up. In the fight, both hewing weapons, sword, and axe, and the thrust of spears had been used; and all that could be used as weapon for casting was cast. Some used bows, some threw spears with the hand. So many weapons were cast into the Serpent, and so thick flew spears and arrows, that the shields could scarcely receive them; for on all sides the Serpent was surrounded by war-ships. Then King Olaf's men became so mad with rage, that they ran on board of the enemies' ships, to get at the people with stroke of sword and kill them; but many did not lay themselves so near the Serpent, in order to escape the close encounter with battle-axe or sword; and thus the most of Olaf's men went overboard and sank under their weapons, thinking they were fighting on plain ground. So says Halfred:—

A VIKING SEA FIGHT

"The daring lads shrink not from death,—
O'erboard they leap, and sink beneath
The Serpent's keel: all armed they leap,
And down they sink five fathoms deep.
The foe was daunted at their cheers:
The king, who still the Serpent steers,
In such a strait — beset with foes —
Wanted but some more lads like those."

Einar Tambarskelver, one of the sharpest of bow-shooters, stood by the mast, and shot with his bow. Einar shot an arrow at Earl Eric, which hit the tiller-end just above the earl's head so hard that it entered the wood up to the arrow-shaft. The earl looked that way, and asked if they knew who had shot; and at the same moment another arrow flew between his hand and his side, and into the stuffing of the chief's stool, so that the barb stood far out on the other side. Then said the earl to a man called Fin, — but some say he was of Finn (Laplander) race, and was a superior archer, — "Shoot that tall man by the mast." Fin shot; and the arrow hit the middle of Einar's bow just at the moment that Einar was drawing it, and the bow was split in two parts.

"What is that," cried King Olaf, "that broke with such a noise?"

"Norway, king, from thy hands," cried Einar.

"*No!* not quite so much as that," says the king; "take my bow, and shoot," flinging the bow to him.

Einar took the bow, and drew it over the head of the arrow. "Too weak, too weak," said he, "for the bow of a mighty king!" and throwing the bow aside, he took sword and shield, and fought valiantly.

The king stood on the gangways of the Long Serpent, and shot the greater part of the day; sometimes with the

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

bow, sometimes with the spear, and always throwing two spears at once. He looked down over the ship's side, and saw that his men struck briskly with their swords, and yet wounded but seldom. Then he called aloud, "Why do ye strike so gently that ye seldom cut?" One among the people answered, "The swords are blunt and full of notches." Then the king went down into the fore-hold, opened the chest under the throne, and took out many sharp swords, which he handed to his men; but as he stretched down his right hand with them, some observed that blood was running down under his steel glove, but no one knew where he was wounded.

Desperate was the defense in the Serpent, and there was the heaviest destruction of men done by the fore-castle crew, and those of the forehold, for in both places the men were chosen men, and the ship was highest; but in the middle of the ship the people were thinned. Now when Earl Eric saw there were but few people remaining beside the ship's mast, he determined to board; and he entered the Serpent with four others. Then came Hyrning, the king's brother-in-law, and some others against him, and there was the most severe combat; and at last the earl was forced to leap back on board the Iron Beard again, and some who had accompanied him were killed, and others wounded. Thord Kolbeinsson alludes to this:—

"On Odin's deck, all wet with blood,
The helm-adornéd hero stood;
And gallant Hyrning honor gained,
Clearing all round with sword deep stained.
The high Fielde peaks shall fall,
Ere men forget this to recall."

Now the fight became hot indeed, and many men

A VIKING SEA FIGHT

fell on board the Serpent; and the men on board of her began to be thinned off, and the defense to be weaker. The earl resolved to board the Serpent again, and again he met with a warm reception. When the forecastle men of the Serpent saw what he was doing, they went aft and made a desperate fight; but so many men of the Serpent had fallen, that the ship's sides were in many places quite bare of defenders; and the earl's men poured in all around into the vessel, and all the men who were still able to defend the ship crowded aft to the king, and arrayed themselves for his defense. So says Haldor the Unchristian:—

“Eric cheers on his men, —
‘On to the charge again!’
The gallant few
Of Olaf’s crew
Must refuge take
On the quarterdeck.
Around the king
They stand in ring;
Their shields inclose
The king from foes,
And the few who still remain
Fight madly, but in vain.
Eric cheers on his men —
‘On to the charge again!’”

Kolbiorn the marshal, who had on clothes and arms like the king’s, and was a remarkably stout and handsome man, went up to the king on the quarterdeck. The battle was still going on fiercely even in the forehold. But as many of the earl’s men had now got into the Serpent as could find room, and his ships lay all round her, and few were the people left in the Serpent for defense against so great a force; and in a short time most of the

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Serpent's men fell, brave and stout though they were. King Olaf and Kolbiorn the marshal both sprang overboard, each on his own side of the ship; but the earl's men had laid out boats around the Serpent, and killed those who leaped overboard. Now when the king had sprung overboard, they tried to seize him with their hands, and bring him to Earl Eric; but King Olaf threw his shield over his head, and sank beneath the waters. Kolbiorn held his shield behind him to protect himself from the spears cast at him from the ships which lay round the Serpent, and he fell so upon his shield that it came under him, so that he could not sink so quickly. He was thus taken, and brought into a boat, and they supposed he was the king. He was brought before the earl; and when the earl saw it was Kolbiorn, and not the king, he gave him his life. At the same moment all of King Olaf's men who were in life sprang overboard from the Serpent; and Thorkel Nefia, the king's brother, was the last of all the men who sprang overboard. It is thus told concerning the king by Halfred:—

“The Serpent and the Crane,
Lay wrecks upon the main.
On his sword he cast a glance,—
With it he saw no chance.
To his marshal, who of yore
Many a war-chance had come o'er,
He spoke a word — then drew in breath,
And sprang to his deep-sea death.”

Earl Sigvald, as before related, came from Vendland, in company with King Olaf, with ten ships; but the eleventh ship was manned with the men of Astrid, the king's daughter, the wife of Earl Sigvald. Now when King Olaf sprang overboard, the whole army raised a

A VIKING SEA FIGHT

shout of victory; and then Earl Sigvald and his men put their oars in the water and rowed towards the battle. Haldor the Unchristian tells of it thus:—

“Then first the Vendland vessels came
Into the fight with little fame;
The fight still lingered on the wave,
Tho’ hope was gone with Olaf brave.
War, like a full-fed ravenous beast,
Still oped her grim jaws for the feast.
The few who stood now quickly fled,
When the shout told — ‘Olaf is dead!’”

But the Vendland cutter, in which Astrid’s men were, rowed back to Vendland; and the report went immediately abroad, and was told by many, that King Olaf had cast off his coat of mail under water, and had swam, diving under the long-ships, until he came to the Vendland cutter, and that Astrid’s men had conveyed him to Vendland: and many tales have been made since about the adventures of Olaf the king. Halfred speaks thus about it:—

“Does Olaf live? or is he dead?
Has he the hungry ravens fed?
I scarcely know what I should say,
For many tell the tale each way.
This I can say, nor fear to lie,
That he was wounded grievously, —
So wounded in this bloody strife,
He scarce could come away with life.”

But however this may have been, King Olaf Tryggvason never came back again to his kingdom of Norway.

THE LAST DANISH INVASION

[1066]

BY EDWARD BULWER-LYTTON

[AFTER the death of Edward the Confessor, Harold, Earl of Wessex, was elected king. William of Normandy averred that Edward had promised him the crown — which in any case he had no right to do — and that he should defend his claim. His preparations, however, took many months, and in the mean time, Harold's brother Tostig encouraged Harold Hardrada, King of Norway, to make an attack upon England.

The Editor.]

AT the news of this foe on the north side of the land, King Harold was compelled to withdraw all the forces at watch in the south against the tardy invasion of William. It was the middle of September; eight months had elapsed since the Norman had launched forth his vaunting threat. Would he now dare to come? Come or not, *that* foe was afar, and *this* was in the heart of the country!

Now, York having thus capitulated, all the land round was humbled and awed; and Hardrada and Tostig were blithe and gay; and many days, thought they, must pass ere Harold the King can come from the south to the north.

The camp of the Norsemen was at Stamford Bridge, and that day it was settled that they should formally enter York. Their ships lay in the river beyond; a large

THE LAST DANISH INVASION

portion of the armament was with the ships. The day was warm, and the men with Hardrada had laid aside their heavy mail and were "making merry," talking of the plunder of York, jeering at Saxon valor, and gloating over thoughts of the Saxon maids, whom Saxon men had failed to protect,— when suddenly between them and the town rose and rolled a great cloud of dust. High it rose, and fast it rolled, and from the heart of the cloud shone the spear and the shield.

"What army comes yonder?" said Harold Hardrada.

"Surely," answered Tostig, "it comes from the town that we are to enter as conquerors, and can be but the friendly Northumbrians who have deserted Morcar for me."

Nearer and nearer came the force, and the shine of the arms was like the glancing of ice.

"Advance the World-Ravager!" cried Harold Hardrada, "draw up and to arms!"

Then, picking out three of his briskest youths, he dispatched them to the force on the river with orders to come up quick to the aid. For already, through the cloud and amidst the spears, was seen the flag of the English King. On the previous night King Harold had entered York, unknown to the invaders — appeased the mutiny — cheered the townsfolks; and now came, like the thunderbolt borne by the winds, to clear the air of England from the clouds of the North.

Both armaments drew up in haste, and Hardrada formed his array in the form of a circle, — the line long but not deep, the wings curving round till they met shield to shield. Those who stood in the first rank set their spear-shafts on the ground, the points level with

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

the breast of a horseman; those in the second, with spears yet lower, level with the breast of a horse; thus forming a double palisade against the charge of cavalry. In the center of this circle was placed the Ravager of the World, and round it a rampart of shields. Behind that rampart was the accustomed post at the onset of battle for the king and his body-guard. But Tostig was in front, with his own Northumbrian Lion banner, and his chosen men.

While this army was thus being formed, the English king was marshaling his force in the far more formidable tactics, which his military science had perfected from the warfare of the Danes. That form of battalion, invincible hitherto under his leadership, was in the manner of a wedge or triangle, thus Δ . So that, in attack, the men marched on the foe presenting the smallest possible surface to the missiles, and, in defense, all three lines faced the assailants. King Harold cast his eye over the closing lines, and then, turning to Gurth, who rode by his side, said:—

“Take one man from yon hostile army, and with what joy should we charge on the Northmen!”

“I conceive thee,” answered Gurth mournfully, “and the same thought of that one man makes my arm feel palsied.”

The king mused, and drew down the nasal bar of his helmet.

“Thegns,” said he suddenly, to the score of riders who grouped round him, “follow.” And shaking the rein of his horse, King Harold rode straight to that part of the hostile front from which rose, above the spears, the Northumbrian banner of Tostig. Wondering, but mute,

THE LAST DANISH INVASION

the twenty thegns followed him. Before the grim array, and hard by Tostig's banner, the king checked his steed and cried: —

“Is Tostig, the son of Godwin and Githa, by the flag of the Northumbrian earldom?”

With his helmet raised, and his Norwegian mantle flowing over his mail, Earl Tostig rode forth at that voice, and came up to the speaker.

“What wouldest thou with me, daring foe?”

The Saxon horseman paused, and his deep voice trembled tenderly, as he answered slowly: —

“Thy brother, King Harold, sends to salute thee. Let not the sons from the same womb wage unnatural war in the soil of their fathers.”

“What will Harold the king give to his brother?” answered Tostig. “Northumbria already he hath bestowed on the son of his house's foe.”

The Saxon hesitated, and a rider by his side took up the word: —

“If the Northumbrians will receive thee again, Northumbria shalt thou have, and the king will bestow his late earldom of Wessex on Morcar; if the Northumbrians reject thee thou shalt have all the lordships which King Harold hath promised to Gurth.”

“This is well,” answered Tostig; and he seemed to pause as in doubt; when, made aware of this parley, King Harold Hardrada, on his coal-black steed, with his helm all shining with gold, rode from the lines, and came into hearing.

“Ha!” said Tostig then, turning round, as the giant form of the Norse king threw its vast shadow over the ground.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

"And if I take the offer, what will Harold son of Godwin give to my friend and ally Hardrada of Norway?"

The Saxon rider reared his head at these words, and gazed on the large front of Hardrada, as he answered loud and distinct:—

"Seven feet of land for a grave, or, seeing that he is taller than other men, as much more as his corse may demand!"

"Then go back, and tell Harold my brother to get ready for battle; for never shall the scalds and the warriors of Norway say that Tostig lured their king in his cause, to betray him to his foe. Here did he come, and here came I, to win as the brave win, or die as the brave die!"

A rider of younger and slighter form than the rest here whispered the Saxon king:—

"Delay no more, or thy men's hearts will fear treason."

"The tie is rent from my heart, O Haco," answered the king, "and the heart flies back to our England."

He waved his hand, turned his steed, and rode off. The eye of Hardrada followed the horseman.

"And who," he asked calmly, "is that man who spoke so well?"

"King Harold!" answered Tostig briefly.

"How!" cried the Norseman, reddening, "how was not that made known to me before? Never should he have gone back — never told hereafter the doom of this day!"

With all his ferocity, his envy, his grudge to Harold, and his treason to England, some rude notions of honor

THE LAST DANISH INVASION

still lay confused in the breast of the Saxon; and he answered stoutly:—

“Imprudent was Harold’s coming, and great his danger; but he came to offer me peace and dominion. Had I betrayed him, I had not been his foe, but his murderer!”

The Norse king smiled approvingly, and turning to his chiefs, said dryly:—

“That man was shorter than some of us, but he rode firm in his stirrups.”

And then this extraordinary person, who united in himself all the types of an age that vanished forever in his grave, and who is the more interesting, as in him we see the race from which the Norman sprang, began, in the rich, full voice that pealed deep as an organ, to chaunt his impromptu war-song. He halted in the midst, and with great composure said:—

“That verse is but ill-tuned; I must try a better.”

He passed his hand over his brow, mused an instant, and then, with his fair face all illumined, he burst forth as inspired.

This time, air, rhythm, words, all so chimed in with his own enthusiasm and that of his men, that the effect was inexpressible. It was, indeed, like the charm of those runes which are said to have maddened the Berserker with the frenzy of war.

Meanwhile the Saxon phalanx came on, slow and firm, and in a few minutes the battle began. It commenced first with the charge of the English cavalry (never numerous), led by Leofwine and Haco, but the double palisade of the Norman spears formed an impassable barrier; and the horsemen, recoiling from the frieze,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

rode round the iron circle without other damage than the spear and javelin could effect. Meanwhile, King Harold, who had dismounted, marched, as was his wont, with the body of footmen. He kept his post in the hollow of the triangular wedge, whence he could best issue his orders. Avoiding the side over which Tostig presided, he halted his array in full center of the enemy where the Ravager of the World, streaming high above the inner rampart of shields, showed the presence of the giant Hardrada.

The air was now literally darkened with the flights of arrows and spears; and in a war of missives the Saxons were less skilled than the Norsemen. Still King Harold restrained the ardor of his men, who, sore harassed by the darts, yearned to close on the foe. He himself, standing on a little eminence, more exposed than his meanest soldier, deliberately eyed the sallies of the horse, and watched the moment he foresaw, when, encouraged by his own suspense, and the feeble attacks of the cavalry, the Norsemen would lift their spears from the ground and advance themselves to the assault. That moment came; unable to withhold their own fiery zeal, stimulated by the tromp, and the clash, and the war-hymns of their king, and his choral scalds, the Norsemen broke ground and came on.

"To your axes, and charge!" cried Harold; and passing at once from the center to the front, he led on the array.

The impetus of that artful phalanx was tremendous; it pierced through the ring of the Norwegians; it clove into the rampart of shields; and King Harold's battle-axe was the first that shivered that wall of steel, his step

THE LAST DANISH INVASION

the first that strode to the innermost circle that guarded the Ravager of the World.

Then forth, from under the shade of that great flag, came, himself also on foot, Harold Hardrada; shouting and chaunting, he leaped with long strides into the thick of the onslaught. He had flung away his shield, and swaying with both hands his enormous sword, he hewed down man after man, till space grew clear before him; and the English, recoiling in awe before an image of height and strength that seemed superhuman, left but one form standing firm, and in front, to oppose his way.

At that moment the whole strife seemed not to belong to an age comparatively modern; it took a character of remotest eld; and Thor and Odin seemed to have returned to the earth. Behind this towering and Titan warrior, their wild hair streaming long under their helms, came his scalds, all singing their hymns, drunk with the madness of battle. And the Ravager of the World tossed and flapped as it followed, so that the vast raven depicted on its folds seemed horrid with life. And calm and alone, his eye watchful, his axe lifted, his foot ready for rush or for spring,—but firm as an oak against flight,—stood the last of the Saxon Kings.

Down bounded Hardrada, and down shore his sword; King Harold's shield was cloven in two, and the force of the blow brought himself to his knee. But, as swift as the flash of that sword, he sprang to his feet; and while Hardrada still bowed his head, not recovered from the force of his blow, the axe of the Saxon came so full on his helmet that the giant reeled, dropped his sword, and staggered back; his scalds and his chiefs rushed

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

around him. That gallant stand of King Harold saved his English from flight; and now, as they saw him almost lost in the throng, yet still cleaving his way — on, on — to the raven standard, they rallied with one heart, and shouting forth, “Out, out! Holy crosse!” forced their way to his side, and the fight now raged hot and equal, hand to hand. Meanwhile Hardrada, borne a little apart, and relieved from his dinted helmet, recovered the shock of the weightiest blow that had ever dimmed his eye and numbed his hand. Tossing the helmet on the ground, his bright locks glittering like sunbeams, he rushed back to the *mélée*. Again helm and mail went down before him; again through the crowd he saw the arm that had smitten him; again he sprang forward to finish the war with a blow, — when a shaft from some distant bow pierced the throat which the casque now left bare; a sound like the wail of a death-song murmured brokenly from his lips, which then gushed out with blood, and tossing up his arms wildly, he fell to the ground, a corpse. At that sight a yell of such terror and woe, and wrath all commingled, broke from the Norsemen, that it hushed the very war for the moment!

“On!” cried the Saxon king, “let our earth take its spoiler! On to the standard, and the day is our own!”

“On to the standard!” cried Haco, who, his horse slain under him, all bloody with wounds not his own, now came to the king’s side. Grim and tall rose the standard, and the streamer shrieked and flapped in the wind as if the raven had voice, when right before Harold, right between him and the banner, stood Tostig his brother, known by the splendor of his mail, the gold work on his mantle — known by the fierce laugh, and

THE LAST DANISH INVASION

defying voice. "What matters!" cried Haco; "strike, O king, for thy crown!"

Harold's hand gripped Haco's arm convulsively; he lowered his axe, turned round, and passed shudderingly away.

Both armies now paused from the attack; for both were thrown into great disorder, and each gladly gave respite to the other, to re-form its own shattered array.

The Norsemen were not soldiers to yield because their leader was slain — rather the more resolute to fight, since revenge was now added to valor; yet, but for the daring and promptness with which Tostig had cut his way to the standard, the day had been already decided.

During the pause, Harold, summoning Gurth, said to him in great emotion, "For the sake of Nature, for the love of God, go, O Gurth, — go to Tostig; urge him, now Hardrada is dead, urge him to peace. All that we can proffer with honor, proffer — quarter and free retreat to every Norseman. Oh, save me, save us, from a brother's blood!"

Gurth lifted his helmet, and kissed the mailed hand that grasped his own.

"I go," said he. And so, bareheaded, and with a single trumpeter, he went to the hostile lines.

Harold awaited him in great agitation; nor could any man have guessed what bitter and awful thoughts lay in that heart, from which, in the way to power, tie after tie had been wrenched away. He did not wait long; and even before Gurth rejoined him, he knew by an unanimous shout of fury, to which the clash of countless shields chimed in, that the mission had been in vain.

Tostig had refused to hear Gurth, save in presence of

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

the Norwegian chiefs; and when the message had been delivered, they all cried, "We would rather fall one across the corpse of the other, than leave a field in which our king was slain."

"Ye hear them," said Tostig; "as they speak, speak I."

"Not mine this guilt *too*, O God!" said Harold, solemnly lifting his hand on high. "Now, then, to duty."

By this time the Norwegian reinforcements had arrived from the ships, and this for a short time rendered the conflict, that immediately ensued, uncertain and critical. But Harold's generalship was now as consummate as his valor had been daring. He kept his men true to their irrefragable line. Even if fragments splintered off, each fragment threw itself into the form of the resistless wedge. One Norwegian, standing on the bridge of Stamford, long guarded that pass; and no less than forty Saxons are said to have perished by his arm. To him the English king sent a generous pledge, not only of safety for the life, but honor for the valor. The viking refused to surrender, and fell at last by a javelin from the hand of Haco. As if in him had been embodied the unyielding war-god of the Norsemen, in that death died the last hope of the vikings. They fell literally where they stood; many, from sheer exhaustion and the weight of their mail, died without a blow. And in the shades of nightfall, Harold stood amidst the shattered rampart of shields, his foot on the corpse of the standard-bearer, his hand on the Ravager of the World.

"Thy brother's corpse is borne yonder," said Haco

THE LAST DANISH INVASION

in the ear of the king, as, wiping the blood from his sword, he plunged it back into the sheath.

Young Olave, the son of Hardrada, had happily escaped the slaughter. A strong detachment of the Norwegians had still remained with the vessels; and amongst them some prudent old chiefs, who, foreseeing the probable results of the day, and knowing that Hardrada would never quit, save as a conqueror or a corpse, the field on which he had planted the Ravager of the World, had detained the prince almost by force from sharing the fate of his father. But ere those vessels could put out to sea, the vigorous measures of the Saxon king had already intercepted the retreat of the vessels. And then, ranging their shields as a wall round their masts, the bold vikings at least determined to die as men. But with the morning came King Harold himself to the banks of the river, and behind him, with trailed lances, a solemn procession that bore the body of the scald king. They halted on the margin, and a boat was launched towards the Norwegian fleet, bearing a monk who demanded the chiefs to send a deputation, headed by the young prince himself, to receive the corpse of their king, and hear the proposals of the Saxon.

The vikings, who had anticipated no preliminaries to the massacre they awaited, did not hesitate to accept these overtures. Twelve of the most famous chiefs still surviving, and Olave himself, entered the boat; and, standing between his brothers Leofwine and Gurth, Harold thus accosted them:—

“Your king invaded a people that had given him no offense: he has paid the forfeit — we war not with the dead! Give to his remains the honors due to the brave.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Without ransom or condition, we yield to you what can no longer harm us. And for thee, young prince," continued the king, with a tone of pity in his voice, as he contemplated the stately boyhood and proud but deep grief in the face of Olave, "for thee, wilt thou not live to learn that the wars of Odin are treason to the Faith of the Cross? We have conquered — we dare not butcher. Take such ships as ye need for those that survive. Three-and-twenty I offer for your transport. Return to your native shores, and guard them as we have guarded ours. Are ye contented?"

Amongst those chiefs was a stern priest — the Bishop of the Orcades; he advanced, and bent his knee to the king.

"O Lord of England," said he, "yesterday thou didst conquer the form — to-day, the soul. And never more may generous Norsemen invade the coast of him who honors the dead and spares the living."

"Amen!" cried the chiefs, and they all knelt to Harold. The young prince stood a moment irresolute, for his dead father was on the bier before him, and revenge was yet a virtue in the heart of a sea-king. But lifting his eyes to Harold's, the mild and gentle majesty of the Saxon's brow was irresistible in its benign command; and stretching his right hand to the king, he raised on high the other, and said aloud, "Faith and friendship with thee and England evermore."

Then all the chiefs rising, they gathered round the bier, but no hand, in the sight of the conquering foe, lifted the cloth of gold that covered the corpse of the famous king. The bearers of the bier moved on slowly towards the boat; the Norwegians followed with meas-

THE LAST DANISH INVASION

ured funereal steps, and not till the bier was placed on board the royal galley was there heard the wail of woe; but then it came loud, and deep, and dismal, and was followed by a burst of wild song from a surviving scald.

The Norwegian preparations for departure were soon made, and the ships vouchsafed to their convoy raised anchor, and sailed down the stream. Harold's eye watched the ships from the river banks.

"And there," said he at last, "there glide the last sails that shall ever bear the devastating raven to the shores of England."

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

[1066]

BY ROBERT WACE

THE English had built up a fence before them with their shields, and with ash and other wood; and had well joined and wattled in the whole work, so as not to leave even a crevice; and thus they had a barricade in their front, through which any Norman who would attack them must first pass. Being covered in this way by their shields and barricades, their aim was to defend themselves: and if they had remained steady for that purpose, they would not have been conquered that day; for every Norman who made his way in, lost his life, either by hatchet or bill, by club, or other weapon. They wore short and close hauberks, and helmets that hung over their garments. King Harold issued orders and made proclamation round, that all should be ranged with their faces towards the enemy; and that no one should move from where he was; so that, whoever came might find them ready; and that whatever any one, be he Norman or other, should do, each should do his best to defend his own place. Then he ordered the men of Kent to go where the Normans were likely to make the attack; for they say that the men of Kent are entitled to strike first; and that whenever the king goes to battle, the first blow belongs to them. The right of the men of London is to guard the king's body, to place themselves around him,

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

and to guard his standard; and they were accordingly placed by the standard to watch and defend it.

When Harold had made his reply, and given his orders, he came into the midst of the English, and dismounted by the side of the standard. Leofwine and Gurth, his brothers, were with him, and around him he had barons enough, as he stood by his standard, which was in truth a noble one, sparkling with gold and precious stones. After the victory, William sent it to the Pope, to prove and commemorate his great conquest and glory. The English stood in close ranks, ready and eager for the fight; and they moreover made a fosse, which went across the field, guarding one side of their army.

Meanwhile the Normans appeared advancing over the ridge of a rising ground; and the first division of their troops moved onwards along the hill and across a valley. And presently another division, still larger, came in sight, close following upon the first, and they were led towards another part of the field, forming together as the first body had done. And while Harold saw and examined them, and was pointing them out to Gurth, a fresh company came in sight, covering all the plain; and in the midst of them was raised the standard that came from Rome. Near it was the duke, and the best men and greatest strength of the army were there. The good knights, the good vassals, and brave warriors were there; and there were gathered together the gentle barons, the good archers, and the men-at-arms, whose duty it was to guard the duke, and range themselves around him. The youths and common herd of the camp, whose business was not to join in the battle, but to take

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

care of the harness and stores, moved off towards a rising ground. The priests and the clerks also ascended a hill, there to offer up prayers to God, and watch the event of the battle.

The English stood firm on foot in close ranks, and carried themselves right boldly. Each man had his hauberk on, with his sword girt, and his shield at his neck. Great hatchets were also slung at their necks, with which they expected to strike heavy blows.

The Normans brought on the three divisions of their army to attack at different places. They set out in three companies, and in three companies did they fight. The first and second had come up, and then advanced the third, which was the greatest; with that came the duke with his own men, and all moved boldly forward.

As soon as the two armies were in full view of each other, great noise and tumult arose. You might hear the sound of many trumpets, of bugles, and of horns: and then you might see men ranging themselves in line, lifting their shields, raising their lances, bending their bows, handling their arrows, ready for assault and defense.

The English stood steady to their post, the Normans still moved on; and when they drew near, the English were to be seen stirring to and fro; were going and coming; troops ranging themselves in order; some with their color rising, others turning pale; some making ready their arms; others raising their shields; the brave man rousing himself to fight, the coward trembling at the approach of danger.

Then Taillefer, who sang right well, rode mounted on a swift horse, before the duke, singing of Charlemagne, and of Roland, of Olivier, and the Peers who died in

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

Roncesvalles. And when they drew nigh to the English, "A boon, sire!" cried Taillefer; "I have long served you, and you owe me for all such service. To-day, so please you, you shall repay it. I ask as my guerdon and beseech you for it earnestly, that you will allow me to strike the first blow in the battle!" And the duke answered, "I grant it." Then Taillefer put his horse to a gallop, charging before all the rest, and struck an Englishman dead, driving his lance below the breast into his body, and stretching him upon the ground. Then he drew his sword, and struck another, crying out, "Come on, come on! What do ye, sirs? lay on, lay on!" At the second blow he struck, the English pushed forward, and surrounded and slew him. Forthwith arose the noise and cry of war, and on either side the people put themselves in motion.

The Normans moved on to the assault, and the English defended themselves well. Some were striking, others urging onwards; all were bold, and cast aside fear. And now, behold, that battle was gathered, whereof the fame is yet mighty.

Loud and far resounded the bray of the horns; and the shocks of the lances, the mighty strokes of maces, and the quick clashing of swords. One while the Englishmen rushed on, another while they fell back; one while the men from oversea charged onwards, and again at other times retreated. The Normans shouted "Dex aie," the English people "Out." Then came the cunning maneuvers, the rude shocks and strokes of the lances and blows of the swords, among the sergeants and soldiers, both English and Norman.

When the English fall, the Normans shout. Each side

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

taunts and defies the other, yet neither knoweth what the other saith; and the Normans say the English bark, because they understand not their speech.

Some wax strong, others weak: the brave exult, but the cowards tremble, as men who are sore dismayed. The Normans press on the assault, and the English defend their post well: they pierce the hauberks, and cleave the shields, receive and return mighty blows. Again, some press forwards; others yield, and thus in various ways the struggle proceeds. In the plain was a fosse, which the Normans had now behind them, having passed it in the fight without regarding it. But the English charged and drove the Normans before them till they made them fall back upon this fosse, overthrowing into it horses and men. Many were to be seen falling therein, rolling one over the other, with their faces to the earth, and unable to rise. Many of the English, also, whom the Normans drew down along with them, died there. At no time during the day's battle did so many Normans die as perished in that fosse. So those said who saw the dead.

The varlets who were set to guard the harness began to abandon it as they saw the loss of the Frenchmen, when thrown back upon the fosse without power to recover themselves. Being greatly alarmed at seeing the difficulty in restoring order, they began to quit the harness, and sought around, not knowing where to find shelter. Then Duke William's brother, Odo, the good priest, the bishop of Bayeux, galloped up, and said to them, "Stand fast! stand fast! be quiet and move not! fear nothing, for if God please, we shall conquer yet." So they took courage, and rested where they were; and

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

Odo returned galloping back to where the battle was most fierce, and was of great service on that day. He had put a hauberk on, over a white aube; wide in the body, with the sleeve tight; and sat on a white horse, so that all might recognize him. In his hand he held a mace, and wherever he saw most need he held up and stationed the knights, and often urged them on to assault and strike the enemy.

From nine o'clock in the morning, when the combat began, till three o'clock came, the battle was up and down, this way and that, and no one knew who would conquer and win the land. Both sides stood so firm and fought so well, that no one could guess which would prevail. The Norman archers with their bows shot thickly upon the English; but they covered themselves with their shields, so that the arrows could not reach their bodies, nor do any mischief, how true soever was their aim, or however well they shot. Then the Normans determined to shoot their arrows upwards into the air, so that they might fall on their enemies' heads, and strike their faces. The archers adopted this scheme, and shot up into the air towards the English; and the arrows in falling struck their heads and faces, and put out the eyes of many; and all feared to open their eyes, or leave their faces unguarded.

The arrows now flew thicker than rain before the wind; fast sped the shafts that the English called "wibetes." Then it was that an arrow, that had thus been shot upwards, struck Harold above his right eye, and put it out. In his agony he drew the arrow and threw it away, breaking it with his hands: and the pain to his head was so great, that he leaned upon his shield.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

So the English were wont to say, and still say to the French, that the arrow was well shot which was so sent up against their king; and that the archer won them great glory, who thus put out Harold's eye.

The Normans saw that the English defended themselves well, and were so strong in their position that they could do little against them. So they consulted together privily, and arranged to draw off, and pretend to flee, till the English should pursue and scatter themselves over the field; for they saw that if they could once get their enemies to break their ranks, they might be attacked and discomfited much more easily. As they had said, so they did. The Normans by little and little fled, the English following them. As the one fell back, the other pressed after; and when the Frenchmen retreated, the English thought and cried out, that the men of France fled, and would never return.

Thus they were deceived by the pretended flight, and great mischief thereby befell them; for if they had not moved from their position, it is not likely that they would have been conquered at all; but like fools they broke their lines and pursued.

The Normans were to be seen following up their stratagem, retreating slowly so as to draw the English further on. As they still flee, the English pursue; they push out their lances and stretch forth their hatchets: following the Normans, as they go rejoicing in the success of their scheme, and scattering themselves over the plain. And the English meantime jeered and insulted their foes with words. "Cowards," they cried, "you came hither in an evil hour, wanting our lands, and seeking to seize our property, fools that ye were to come!"

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

Normandy is too far off, and you will not easily reach it. It is of little use to run back; unless you can cross the sea at a leap, or can drink it dry, your sons and daughters are lost to you."

The Normans bore it all, but in fact they knew not what the English said; their language seemed like the baying of dogs, which they could not understand. At length they stopped and turned round, determined to recover their ranks; and the barons might be heard crying "Dex aie!" for a halt. Then the Normans resumed their former position, turning their faces towards the enemy; and their men were to be seen facing round and rushing onwards to a fresh *mélée*; the one party assaulting the other; this man striking, another pressing onwards. One hits, another misses; one flies, another pursues: one is aiming a stroke, while another discharges his blow. Norman strives with Englishman again, and aims his blows afresh. One flies, another pursues swiftly: the combatants are many, the plain wide, the battle and the *mélée* fierce. On every hand they fight hard, the blows are heavy, and the struggle becomes fierce.

The Normans were playing their part well, when an English knight came rushing up, having in his company a hundred men, furnished with various arms. He wielded a northern hatchet, with the blade a full foot long; and was well armed after his manner, being tall, bold, and of noble carriage. In the front of the battle where the Normans thronged most, he came bounding on swifter than the stag, many Normans falling before him and his company. He rushed straight upon a Norman who was armed and riding on a war-horse, and

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

tried with his hatchet of steel to cleave his helmet; but the blow miscarried, and the sharp blade glanced down before the saddle-bow, driving through the horse's neck down to the ground, so that both horse and master fell together to the earth. I know not whether the Englishman struck another blow; but the Normans who saw the stroke were astonished, and about to abandon the assault, when Roger de Montgomeri came galloping up, with his lance set, and heeding not the long-handled axe, which the Englishman wielded aloft, struck him down, and left him stretched upon the ground. Then Roger cried out, "Frenchmen, strike! the day is ours!" And again a fierce *mélée* was to be seen, with many a blow of lance and sword; the English still defending themselves, killing the horses and cleaving the shields.

There was a French soldier of noble mien, who sat his horse gallantly. He spied two Englishmen who were also carrying themselves boldly. They were both men of great worth, and had become companions in arms and fought together, the one protecting the other. They bore two long and broad bills, and did great mischief to the Normans, killing both horses and men. The French soldier looked at them and their bills, and was sore alarmed, for he was afraid of losing his good horse, the best that he had; and would willingly have turned to some other quarter, if it would not have looked like cowardice. He soon, however, recovered his courage, and spurring his horse gave him the bridle, and galloped swiftly forward. Fearing the two bills, he raised his shield, and struck one of the Englishmen with his lance on the breast, so that the iron passed out at his back. At the moment that he fell, the lance broke, and the

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

Frenchman seized the mace that hung at his right side, and struck the other Englishman a blow that completely broke his skull.

On the other side was an Englishman who much annoyed the French, continually assaulting them with a keen-edged hatchet. He had a helmet made of wood, which he had fastened down to his coat, and laced round his neck, so that no blows could reach his head. The ravage he was making was seen by a gallant Norman knight, who rode a horse that neither fire nor water could stop in its career, when its master urged it on. The knight spurred, and his horse carried him on well till he charged the Englishman, striking him over the helmet, so that it fell down over his eyes; and as he stretched out his hand to raise it and uncover the face, the Norman cut off his right hand, so that his hatchet fell to the ground. Another Norman sprang forward and eagerly seized the prize with both his hands, but he kept it little space, and paid dearly for it, for as he stooped to pick up the hatchet, an Englishman with his long-handled axe struck him over the back, breaking all his bones, so that his entrails and lungs gushed forth. The knight of the good horse meantime returned without injury; but on his way he met another Englishman, and bore him down under his horse, wounding him grievously, and trampling him altogether under foot.

And now might be heard the loud clang and cry of battle, and the clashing of lances. The English stood firm in their barricades, and shivered the lances, beating them into pieces with their bills and maces. The Normans drew their swords, and hewed down the barricades, and the English in great trouble fell back upon

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

their standard, where were collected the maimed and wounded.

There were many knights of Chauz, who jested and made attacks. The English knew not how to joust, or bear arms on horseback, but fought with hatchets and bills. A man, when he wanted to strike with one of their hatchets, was obliged to hold it with both his hands, and could not at the same time, as it seems to me, both cover himself and strike with any freedom.

The English fell back towards the standard which was upon a rising ground, and the Normans followed them across the valley; attacking them on foot and horseback. Then Hue de Mortemer, with the sires D'Auviler, D'Onebac, and St. Cler, rode up and charged, overthrowing many.

Robert Fitz Erneis fixed his lance, took his shield, and, galloping towards the standard, with his keen-edged sword struck an Englishman who was in front, killed him, and then drawing back his sword, attacked many others, and pushed straight for the standard, trying to beat it down, but the English surrounded it, and killed him with their bills. He was found on the spot, when they afterwards sought for him, dead, and lying at the standard's foot.

Duke William pressed close upon the English with his lance; striving hard to reach the standard with the great troop he led; and seeking earnestly for Harold, on whose account the whole war was. The Normans follow their lord, and press around him; they ply their blows upon the English; and these defend themselves stoutly, striving hard with their enemies, returning blow for blow.

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

One of them was a man of great strength, a wrestler, who did great mischief to the Normans with his hatchet; all feared him, for he struck down a great many Normans. The duke spurred on his horse, and aimed a blow at him, but he stooped, and so escaped the stroke; then jumping on one side, he lifted his hatchet aloft, and as the duke bent to avoid the blow, the Englishman boldly struck him on the head, and beat in his helmet, though without doing much injury. He was very near falling, however, but bearing on his stirrups he recovered himself immediately; and when he thought to have revenged himself upon the churl by killing him, he had escaped, dreading the duke's blow. He ran back in among the English, but he was not safe even there; for the Normans seeing him, pursued and caught him; and having pierced him through and through with their lances, left him dead on the ground.

Where the throng of the battle was greatest, the men of Kent and Essex fought wondrously well, and made the Normans again retreat, but without doing them much injury. And when the duke saw his men fall back, and the English triumphing over them, his spirit rose high, and he seized his shield and his lance, which a vassal handed to him, and took his post by his standard.

Then those who kept close guard by him and rode where he rode, being about a thousand armed men, came and rushed with closed ranks upon the English; and with the weight of their good horses, and the blows the knights gave, broke the press of the enemy, and scattered the crowd before them, the good duke leading them on in front. Many pursued and many fled; many were the Englishmen who fell around, and were tram-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

pled under the horses, crawling upon the earth, and not able to rise. Many of the richest and noblest men fell in that rout, but the English still rallied in places; smote down those whom they reached, and maintained the combat the best they could; beating down the men and killing the horses. One Englishman watched the duke, and plotted to kill him; he would have struck him with his lance, but he could not, for the duke struck him first, and felled him to the earth.

Loud was now the clamor, and great the slaughter; many a soul then quitted the body it inhabited. The living marched over the heaps of dead, and each side was weary of striking. He charged on who could, and he who could no longer strike still pushed forward. The strong struggled with the strong; some failed, others triumphed; the cowards fell back, the brave pressed on; and sad was his fate who fell in the midst, for he had little chance of rising again; and many in truth fell, who never rose at all, being crushed under the throng.

And now the Normans pressed on so far, that at last they had reached the standard. There Harold had remained, defending himself to the utmost; but he was sorely wounded in his eye by the arrow, and suffered grievous pain from the blow. An armed man came in the throng of the battle, and struck him on the ventaille of his helmet, and beat him to the ground; and as he sought to recover himself, a knight beat him down again, striking him on the thick of his thigh, down to the bone.

Gurth saw the English falling around, and that there was no remedy. He saw his race hastening to ruin, and despaired of any aid; he would have fled, but could not,

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

for the throng continually increased. And the duke pushed on till he reached him, and struck him with great force. Whether he died of that blow I know not, but it was said that he fell under it, and rose no more.

The standard was beaten down, the golden standard was taken, and Harold and the best of his friends were slain; but there was so much eagerness, and throng of so many around, seeking to kill him, that I know not who it was that slew him.

The English were in great trouble at having lost their king, and at the duke's having conquered and beat down the standard; but they still fought on, and defended themselves long, and in fact till the day drew to a close. Then it clearly appeared to all that the standard was lost, and the news had spread throughout the army that Harold for certain was dead; and all saw that there was no longer any hope, so they left the field, and those fled who could.

THE BATTLE OF CRÉCY

[1346]

BY SIR JOHN FROISSART

THE English, who were drawn up in three divisions and seated on the ground, on seeing their enemies advance, rose undauntedly up and fell into their ranks. That of the prince was the first to do so, whose archers were formed in the manner of a portcullis or harrow, and the men-at-arms in the rear. The earls of Northampton and Arundel, who commanded the second division, had posted themselves in good order on his wing, to assist and succor the prince if necessary.

You must know that these kings, earls, barons, and lords of France did not advance in any regular order, but one after the other, or any way most pleasing to themselves. As soon as the King of France came in sight of the English, his blood began to boil, and he cried out to his marshals, "Order the Genoese forward and begin the battle, in the name of God and St. Denis." There were about fifteen thousand Genoese crossbowmen; but they were quite fatigued, having marched on foot that day six leagues, completely armed, and with their crossbows. They told the constable they were not in a fit condition to do any great things that day in battle. The Earl of Alençon, hearing this, said, "This is what one gets by employing such scoundrels, who fall off when there is any need for them." During this time a heavy rain fell, accompanied by thunder and a very terrible

THE BATTLE OF CRÉCY

eclipse of the sun; and before this rain a great flight of crows hovered in the air over all those battalions, making a loud noise. Shortly afterwards it cleared up, and the sun shone very bright; but the Frenchmen had it in their faces, and the English in their backs. When the Genoese were somewhat in order, and approached the English, they set up a loud shout, in order to frighten them; but they remained quite still, and did not seem to attend to it. They then set up a second shout, and advanced a little forward; but the English never moved.

They hooted a third time, advancing with their crossbows presented, and began to shoot. The English archers then advanced one step forward, and shot their arrows with such force and quickness that it seemed as if it snowed. When the Genoese felt these arrows, which pierced their arms, heads, and through their armor, some of them cut the strings of their crossbows, others flung them on the ground, and all turned about and retreated quite discomfited. The French had a fine body of men-at-arms on horseback, richly dressed, to support the Genoese. The King of France, seeing them thus fall back, cried out, “Kill me those scoundrels; for they stop up our road without any reason.” You would then have seen the above-mentioned men-at-arms lay about them, killing all they could of these runaways.

The English continued shooting as vigorously and quickly as before; some of their arrows fell among the horsemen, who were sumptuously equipped, and, killing and wounding many, made them caper and fall among the Genoese so that they were in such confusion they could never rally again. In the English army there were some Cornish and Welsh men on foot, who had

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

armed themselves with large knives: these advancing through the ranks of the men-at-arms and archers, who made way for them, came upon the French when they were in this danger, and falling upon earls, barons, knights, and squires slew many, at which the King of England was afterwards much exasperated.

The valiant King of Bohemia was slain there. He was called Charles of Luxembourg; for he was the son of the gallant king and Emperor, Henry of Luxembourg: having heard the order of the battle, he inquired where his son, the Lord Charles, was: his attendants answered that they did not know, but believed he was fighting. The king said to them: "Gentlemen, you are all my people, my friends and brethren at arms this day: therefore, as I am blind, I request of you to lead me so far into the engagement that I may strike one stroke with my sword." The knights replied, they would lead him forward; and in order that they might not lose him in the crowd, they fastened all the reins of their horses together, and put the king at their head, that he might gratify his wish, and advanced toward the enemy. The Lord Charles of Bohemia, who already signed his name as King of Germany and bore the arms, had come in good order to the engagement; but when he perceived that it was likely to turn out against the French, he departed, and I do not well know what road he took. The king, his father, had ridden in among the enemy, and made good use of his sword; for he and his companions had fought most gallantly. They had advanced so far that they were all slain; and on the morrow they were found on the ground with their horses all tied together.

The Earl of Alençon advanced in regular order upon

THE BATTLE OF CRÉCY

the English, to fight with them; as did the Earl of Flanders, in another part. These two lords with their detachments coasting, as it were, the archers, came to the prince's battalion, where they fought valiantly for a length of time. The King of France was eager to march to the place where he saw their banners displayed, but there was a hedge of archers before him. He had that day made a present of a handsome black horse to Sir John of Hainault, who had mounted on it a knight of his, called Sir John de Fusselles, that bore his banner: which horse ran away with him, and forced his way through the English army and, when about to return, stumbled and fell into a ditch and severely wounded him: he would have been dead if his page had not followed him round the battalions, and found him unable to rise: he had not, however, any other hindrance than from his horse; for the English did not quit the ranks that day to make prisoners. The page alighted, and raised him up; but he did not return the way he came, as he would have found it difficult from the crowd. This battle, which was fought on the Saturday between La Broyes and Crécy, was very murderous and cruel; and many gallant deeds of arms were performed that were never known. Toward evening, many knights and squires of the French had lost their masters: they wandered up and down the plain, attacking the English in small parties: they were soon destroyed; for the English had determined that day to give no quarter or hear of ransom from any one.

Early in the day, some French, Germans, and Savoyards had broken through the archers of the prince's battalion, and had engaged with the men-at-arms; upon

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

which the second battalion came to his aid, and it was time, for otherwise he would have been hard pressed. The first division, seeing the danger they were in, sent a knight in great haste to the King of England, who was posted upon an eminence near a windmill. On the knight's arrival, he said, "Sir, the Earl of Warwick, the Lord Reginald Cobham, and the others who are about your son are vigorously attacked by the French; and they entreat that you would come to their assistance with your battalion, for, if their numbers should increase, they fear he will have too much to do." The king replied, "Is my son dead, unhorsed, or so badly wounded that he cannot support himself?" "Nothing of the sort, thank God," rejoined the knight; "but he is in so hot an engagement that he has great need of your help." The king answered, "Now, Sir Thomas, return back to those that sent you, and tell them from me not to send again for me this day or expect that I shall come, let what will happen, as long as my son has life; and say that I command them to let the boy win his spurs, for I am determined, if it please God, that all the glory and honor of this day shall be given to him and to those into whose care I have entrusted him." The knight returned to his lords and related the king's answer, which mightily encouraged them, and made them repent they had ever sent such a message. . . .

When, on the Saturday night, the English heard no more hooting or shouting, nor any more crying out to particular lords or their banners, they looked upon the field as their own, and their enemies as beaten. They made great fires and lighted torches because of the obscurity of the night. King Edward then came down

THE BATTLE OF CRÉCY

from his post, who all that day had not put on his helmet, and with his whole battalion advanced to the Prince of Wales, whom he embraced in his arms and kissed, and said, "Sweet son, God give you good perseverance: you are my son, for most loyally have you acquitted yourself this day: you are worthy to be a sovereign." The prince bowed down very low, and humbled himself, giving all the honor to the king his father.

THE DEATH OF WINKELRIED

[1386]

BY WALTER THORNBURY

[IN the fourteenth century a number of the districts of Switzerland joined together for defense against the Hapsburg rulers of Austria. The power of the league grew rapidly; and the determination of Austria to crush these rebellious peasants increased no less rapidly. In 1386 came the battle of Sempach. The Swiss with their wooden bucklers were at first helpless to make any break in the Austrian wall of bristling spears; but in the end they triumphed and drove the Austrians from the field. According to tradition, it was the devotion of Arnold von Winkelried that opened the way to victory.

The Editor.]

IN July, when the bees swarmed thick upon the linden tops,
And farmers gazed with pride and joy upon their ripening crops,
The watchmen on our tall church towers, looking towards Willisow,
Saw the stacked barley in a flame and the wheat-fields in a glow.

For Archduke Leopold had come from Zurich by the lake,
With lance, and bow, and banner spread, a dire revenge to take.

THE DEATH OF WINKELRIED

On Monday morning, when the dew lay bright upon the
corn,
Each man of Sempach blew alarm upon his mountain
horn.

The young and old from fair Lucerne gathered to bar
the way,
The reapers threw their sickles down, and ran to join
the fray:
We knelt and prayed to heaven for strength, crying to
God aloud;
And lo! a rainbow rising shone against a thunder-cloud.

Burghers of Berne, the lads of Schweitz, and Unter-
walden's best,
Warriors of Uri, strong as bulls, were there among the
rest;
The oldest of our mountain priests had come to fight,—
not pray,
Our women only kept at home upon that battle-day.

The shepherds, sturdy wrestlers with the grim moun-
tain bear,
The chamois hunters, lithe and swift, mingle together
there;
Rough boatmen from the mountain lakes, and fisher-
men by scores;
The children only had been left to guard the nets and oars.

The herdsmen joined us from their huts on the far
mountain-side,
Where cow-bells chimed among the pines, and far above
in pride

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

The granite peaks rose soaring up in snowy pinnacles,
Past glaciers' ever-gaping jaws and vultures' citadels.

The citizens of Zürich town under their banners stood,
Their burly lances bleak and bare as any winter wood;
Geneva sent her archers stout, and swordsmen not a
few,
And over the brave men of Berne their great town ban-
ner blew.

How fierce we ran with partisan and axe and spear and
sword,
With flail and club and shrieking horns, upon that
Austrian horde!
But they stood silent in the sun, mocking the Switzer
bear,
Their helmets crested, beaked, and fanged, like the
wild beasts they were.

Like miners digging iron ore from some great mountain
heart,
We strove to hew and rend and cleave that hill of steel
apart;
But clamped like statues stood the knights in their
spiked phalanx strong,
Though our Swiss halberds and our swords hewed
fiercely at the throng.

Hot, sharp, and thick our arrows fell upon their helmet
crests,
Keen on their visors' glaring bars, and sharp upon their
breasts;

THE DEATH OF WINKELRIED

Fierce plied our halberds at the spears, that thicker
seemed to grow:
The more we struck, more boastfully the banners
seemed to blow.

The Austrians, square and close locked up, stood firm
with threatening spears,
Only the sterner when our bolts flew thick about their
ears;
Our drifts of arrows blinding fell, and nailed the mail
to breast,
But e'en the dead men as they dropped were ramparts
to the rest.

With furnace heat the red sun shone upon that wall of
steel,
And crimsoned every Austrian knight from helmet unto
heel.
They slew their horses where they stood, and shortened
all their spears,
Then back to back, like boars at bay, they mocked our
angry cheers.

Till Winkelried stepped forth, and said, knitting his
rugged brow,
“Out on ye, men of Zürich town! go back and tend your
plough;
Sluggards of Berne, go hunt and fish, when danger is
not nigh;
See now how Unterwalden taught her hardy sons to
die!”

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Then out he rushed with head bent low; his body,
breast, and hands
Bore down a sheaf of spears, and made a pathway for
our bands.
Four lances splintered on his brow, six shivered in his
side,
But still he struggled fiercely on, and, shouting "Victory!" died.

Then on that broken, flying rout, we Swiss, rejoicing,
rushed,
With sword and mace and partisan that struck and
stabbed and crushed;
Their banners beaten to the earth, and all their best
men slain,
The Austrians threw away their shields and fled across
the plain.

And thus our Switzerland was saved, upon that summer's day,
And Sempach saw rejoicing men returning from the
fray.
As we bore home brave Winkelried a rainbow spanned
our track,
But where the Austrian rabble fled a thunder-storm
rolled black.

THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

[1415]

BY MICHAEL DRAYTON

FAIR stood the wind for France,
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
 Longer will tarry.
But putting to the main,
At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train,
 Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Marcheth towards Agincourt,
 In happy hour;
Skirmishing day by day
With those that stopped his way,
Where the French general lay
 With all his power.

Which in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
 To the king sending;
Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile
 Their fall portending;

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Harry then,
“Though they be one to ten,
 Be not amazed;
Yet have we well begun,
Battles so bravely won
Have ever to the sun
 By fame been raised.

“And for myself,” quoth he,
“This my full rest shall be,
England ne'er mourn for me,
 Nor more esteem me.
Victor I will remain,
Or on this earth lie slain,
Never shall she sustain
 Loss to redeem me.

“Poitiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell.
 No less our skill is,
Than when our grandsire-great,
Claiming the regal seat,
By many a warlike feat
 Lopped the French lilies.”

The Duke of York so dread
The eager va'ward led;
With the main, Henry sped,
 Amongst his henchmen.

MORNING OF THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT



THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

Exeter had the rear,
A braver man not there,
O lord, how hot they were
 On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone,
Armor on armor shone,
Drum now to drum did groan,
 To hear, was wonder;
That with the cries they make,
The very earth did shake,
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
 Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which didst the signal aim
 To our hid forces;
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly,
The English archery
 Struck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stung,
 Piercing the weather;
None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts,
 Stuck close together.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbos drew,
And on the French they flew,
 Not one was tardy;
Arms were from shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went.
 Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king,
His broadsword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding,
 As to o'erwhelm it,
And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
 Bruisèd his helmet.

Gloucester, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood,
 With his brave brother;
Clarence, in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight
 Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
 Still as they ran up;

THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

Suffolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right droughtily,
Ferrers and Fanhope.

Upon Saint Crispin's day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay
 To England to carry;
Oh, when shall Englishmen
With such acts fill a pen,
Or England breed again
 Such a King Harry?

THE BATTLE OF BOSWORTH FIELD

[1485]

BY OWEN RHOSCOMYL

[TOWARD the end of the fifteenth century Richard III succeeded in usurping the throne of England. His tyranny and the crimes by which he had accomplished his object so aroused the English people that they invited Henry Tudor, a descendant of John of Gaunt and also of Owen Tudor, a Welsh gentleman who had married the widow of Henry V, to become their sovereign. He landed at Milford in 1485, and was soon engaged in a fierce battle with Richard at Bosworth. Henry was successful and was crowned on the battlefield as Henry VII.

The Editor.]

CLOUDILY dawned the morning of that Monday, August 22, 1485, when Henry Tudor drew out the host of his gallant countrymen for the battle that was to close a thousand years of struggle. It was to close more; it was to close the mediæval period of British history, and to open the modern day, the day of our own empire.

Richard III, king that morning, drew out his host from its tents at Sutton, and saw, two miles to his left front, the host of Henry, king that night. To his right front, on Hanging Hill at Nether Coton, he saw the host of Sir William Stanley, the men of Northeast Cymru. On his immediate right lay Lord Stanley's men.

THE BATTLE OF BOSWORTH FIELD

He sent to order Lord Stanley to join him, but Lord Stanley would not come.

Then Richard measured what he had to do. His army was nearly equal in numbers to all the other three combined. It was far better equipped and armored. Moreover, it was composed for the most part of veteran troops; there were no sweepings of jails and hospitals with him, like the men that Henry had brought from France.

The ground, too, was all in Richard's favor. In front of him ran out the long tongue of Anbian Hill. Round it, on the north and west, lay a long, winding marsh, between him and the other armies. That marsh could only be crossed at Sandeford, where the ancient track-way, which he had followed from Stapleton, ran on down from Anbian Hill to Shenton and Henry's camp. Therefore he would take up a position on the end of the ridge of Anbian Hill, overlooking Sandeford crossing, and there wait Henry's coming. Richard was one of the best generals of his day.

But if he were to march straight off to do it, then Lord Stanley, yonder on his right, might swing round the head of the marsh, and attack him from behind, just when the others attacked him in front. That would mean certain defeat. Therefore he commanded the Earl of Northumberland, whose men were as many as Lord Stanley's, to stand fast where he was, and keep Lord Stanley off. Then, with his eight thousand and more of veterans, he set forward along the ridge of Anbian Hill.

Henry Tudor, as he drew out his men from the camp at Whitemoor, could look across the marsh and see the

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

plain of Redmoor beyond it, swelling up into the crest of Anbian Hill. On that crest he could see the front of Richard's army, one wide wave of glittering steel, ranging into position. He saw what Richard intended. He knew that he himself must cross the marsh and attack Anbian Hill.

Every disadvantage was with Henry. His own men, including the worthless foreigners, were not nearly so many as Richard's. He had sent for Lord Stanley, and Lord Stanley had refused to come to him. But he still trusted Sir William Stanley, for Sir William's men were Cymry.

He knew that the marsh could only be crossed at Sandeford. The ancient trackway from his camp led to that crossing, and onward to Richard's position. The track would lead him the right way then; the marsh would protect his right flank while he marched to Sandeford, and there, when he turned the head of the column to the right to cross the little stream, the troops of Sir William Stanley would be but a mile or so away, behind him on Hanging Hill. Then Sir William could follow him on over the crossing and join him in the attack. It was the only plan, now, — and he marched to carry it out.

When he came to Sandeford, he led the way across the marsh to array his men on Redmoor beyond. Still no Stanley came. But it was ten o'clock, and the battle must be fought, Stanley or no Stanley. Above him rose the steel-crowned crest of Anbian, and the harvest sun shone dazzlingly into the eyes of his archers as they faced the slope. Behind them was the wide marsh to cut them off from retreat or flight if they were beaten.

THE BATTLE OF BOSWORTH FIELD

They were few and the foes were many. They were on the low ground, and the foe with his cannon was on the high ground. To attack now would be boldness, indeed. But they were bold hearts; they attacked.

When the order was given to prepare — “Lord!” says the old chronicler, “how hastily the soldiers buckled on their helms; how quickly the archers bent their bows and flushed the feathers of their arrows; how readily the billmen shook their bills and proved their staves, ready to approach and join, when the terrible trumpet should sound the blast to victory or death.”

The chronicler used the right word there. It was a case of victory or death to the leaders. For Henry was striking for the crown that meant life and safety to him. The exiles were striking for the home that was the only place in the world for them. The Cymry were striking, in the fire of a pride that nothing could kill. Well might Richard feel haunted.

He looked at all the Cymric banners ranged against him, and he called for a bowl of Burgundy, and turned to his squire, Rhys Vychan.

“Here, Vychan,” he cried, “I drink to thee; the truest Welshman that ever I found in Wales.” And with the words he drank the wine, threw the bowl behind him, and gave the word for the onset.

His van was stretched from the marsh on the right to the marsh on the left — “a very terrible company to them that should see them afar off,” says the chronicler. In the center were the archers, and on either hand of them two wings of men-at-arms, covered with steel from top to toe. Behind them on the hill were Richard and his main body with the cannon.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Henry's van was thin, because his men were fewer. But they were enough. The trumpet blew, the soldiers shouted, the king's archers let fly their arrows. But Henry's bowmen stood not still, they paid them back again. Then, the terrible shot once over, the armies came to handstrokes, and the matter was dealt with blades.

Henry's tactics were all boldness. He still felt that Sir William Stanley's men must come in, for they were Cymry, too, unlike Lord Stanley's. Therefore he pressed the fight on Richard's left till his van had outflanked it. By this movement he could face the slope now with the sun at his back, while it shone in the faces of Richard's men, dazzling their eyes in turn. By this movement, too, he had got Richard's army between him and Sir William Stanley, so that it would be taken in front and rear when Stanley charged — a thing that would mean complete disaster for Richard.

Richard saw that, and with his cavalry swung round to come on Henry's right flank and rear. But there was another green spread of marsh (where now wave Anbian Woods) and it was too soft. His good white horse stuck fast. Shouting for another horse he mounted again, and led the thundering charge straight at Henry's flank. But Earl Jasper was watching. He had the main body of Henry's men under him, the men of old Deheubarth, and while the gallant Earl of Oxford continued the fight in the van, against the Duke of Norfolk, Jasper faced his men to meet the desperate Richard, and beat back his furious onset. Thus, "in array triangle," the fight raged on.

Keenly Henry watched the fight. Now or never was

THE BATTLE OF BOSWORTH FIELD

the moment. Where was Will Stanley with his Cymry? In his anxiety he rode back, attended only by his body-guard and standard-bearer, towards Sandeford, to where he could see if Will Stanley were coming. And as he drew rein to look, one of Richard's men saw him and sped away with the news to his master.

Richard was pausing for a drink from the spring, which is to this day called "King Richard's Well," when the word was brought to him. He saw at once that he had still one last desperate chance. If he could reach and kill Henry, then the victory would be his, seeing that there would be no one left for Henry's men to fight for. He seized the chance. "Let all true knights follow me," he shouted, and spurred away over the hill to where he should find Henry.

Fast poured the flower of Richard's knights after him while Henry's bodyguard saw the onset coming and closed its ranks to defend him. Richard marked the great standard that Sir William Brandon bore, and he charged upon it like a demon. He unhorsed huge Sir John Cheyney who tried to bar his way. He slew the standard-bearer, and laid a hand upon the standard itself. But giant Rhys ap Meredydd, of Nant Conwy, seized it from him and drove him back a breadth, while Henry himself met him with a fury that astonished friend and foe.

Richard raged like a madman, but it was all too late now. Sir William's men were here at last, Richard ap Howel, of Mostyn, with the rest and best. King Richard was borne back, fighting like ten men, yet still borne back. His horse fell; his lords and knights were dead or dying fast around him. Still he raged on. Then came

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Dark Rhys ap Thomas, seeking the king who had once threatened him, and tradition still tells how the blade of Dark Rhys ended the life of the last Norman king, Richard III.

The fall of Richard was the end of the battle, too, for all his men fled at that. Northumberland laid down his arms — there was no more to fight for. Lord Stanley whose troops had never struck a blow, hurried over to Henry, whose men were following the flight of the vanquished.

But all was not done yet. The long, fierce dream of the stubborn Cymry was to be fulfilled to the very letter. They had come into England to win the crown of Britain back for one of the old blood of its founder. They did it in very deed. For when the chase was ended, the crown of dead King Richard was found in a hawthorn bush, and Lord Stanley lifted it and placed it on the head of Henry.

Thus was the long dream fulfilled. The crown of Britain was come back to the descendant of its founder at last. And the wild shout of triumph with which the victors hailed their countryman king is remembered to this day in the name of the field in which they stood and watched him crowned. Its name means "The Field of the Shout."

You may still see the stone whereon that crowning took place. It is in Stoke Golding, and the spot is still called "Crown Hill," in memory of the only time that ever a King of England was crowned on the field of battle.

Lost in battle, that crown had come back in battle. Did the bones of all the slain generations of the Cymry

THE BATTLE OF BOSWORTH FIELD

who had struggled for this day stir in their red graves at that shout? Surely their spirits knew when the work was done at last. Surely a sound like the moving of a mighty wind must have swept over Cymru, for the ghosts of all the heroes, slain in the battles of the thousand years of struggle, could leave their graves at last and go to God — the long work done, the victory won; the “*Nunc Dimittis*” chanted o'er the mountains as they passed.

ON THE FIELD OF FLODDEN

[1513]

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT

[MARGARET TUDOR, sister of Henry VIII of England, became the wife of James IV of Scotland. Now, there were certain jewels which were to be given to Margaret, but Henry refused to send them to her. Naturally, that aroused the wrath of King James. Moreover, although the two countries were at peace, the Lord High Admiral of England seized two Scottish ships, and Henry refused to pay for their loss. Again, Henry was about to make war on France, and as France and Scotland were good friends, James stood by France. He crossed the border and captured some English castles. At last, in September, 1513, the Scots and English met at Flodden Field.

The Editor.]

“BUT, see! look up — on Flodden bent,
The Scottish foe has fired his tent.” —
 And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till,
 Was wreathed in sable smoke:
Volumed, and vast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland’s war,
 As down the hill they broke;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march; their tread alone
At times one warning trumpet blown,
 At times a stifled hum,

ON THE FIELD OF FLODDEN

Told England, from his mountain-throne
King James did rushing come.—

Scarce could they hear or see their foes,
Until at weapon-point they close.—

They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway and with lance's thrust;

And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air.

Long looked the anxious squires; their eye
Could in the darkness naught descry.

At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast;
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears;
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.

Then marked they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumed crests of chieftains brave,
Floating like foam upon the wave

But naught distinct they see;
Wide raged the battle on the plain,
Spears shook, and falchions flashed amain,
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain,
Crests rose, and stooped, and rose again,

Wild and disorderly.
Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly:
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,

THE BOY'S BOOK OF BATTLES

Still bear them bravely in the fight;

Although against them come,

Of gallant Gordons many a one,

And many a stubborn Highlandman,

And many a rugged Border clan,

With Huntley, and with Home.

Far on the left, unseen the while,

Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle,

Though there the western mountaineer

Rushed with bare bosom on the spear,

And flung the feeble targe aside,

And with both hands the broadsword plied;

'T was vain. — But Fortune, on the right,

With fickle smile, cheered Scotland's fight.

Then fell that spotless banner white,

The Howard's lion fell:

Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew

With wavering flight, while fiercer grew

Around the battle yell.

The border slogan rent the sky.

"A Home! a Gordon!" was the cry;

Loud were the clanging blows;

Advanced, — forced back, — now low, now high,

The pennon sank and rose;

As bends the bark's mast in the gale,

When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,

It wavered 'mid the foes.

But as they left the dark'ning heath,

More desperate grew the strife of death.

The English shafts in volleys hailed,

In headlong charge their horse assailed:

ON THE FIELD OF FLODDEN

Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their king.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark, impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight; —
Linked in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well:
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded king.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shattered bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foeman know,
Their king, their lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless splash,
While many a broken band,
Disordered, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;
To town and tower, to down and dale,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.
Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong.
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife and carnage drear,
 Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear,
 And broken was her shield!

THE SIEGE OF LEYDEN

[1574]

BY JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY

THIS city was one of the most beautiful in the Netherlands. Placed in the midst of broad, fruitful pastures, which had been reclaimed by the hand of industry from the bottom of the sea, it was fringed with smiling villages, blooming gardens, fruitful orchards. The ancient, and, at last, decrepit Rhine, flowing languidly towards its sandy death-bed, had been multiplied into innumerable artificial currents, by which the city was completely interlaced. These watery streets were shaded by lime trees, poplars, and willows, and crossed by one hundred and forty-five bridges, mostly of hammered stone. The houses were elegant, the squares and streets spacious, airy, and clean, the churches and public edifices imposing, while the whole aspect of the place suggested thrift, industry, and comfort. Upon an artificial elevation, in the center of the city, rose a ruined tower of unknown antiquity. By some it was considered to be of Roman origin, while others preferred to regard it as a work of the Anglo-Saxon Hengist, raised to commemorate his conquest of England. Surrounded by fruit trees, and overgrown in the center with oaks, it afforded from its mouldering battlements, a charming prospect over a wide expanse of level country, with the spires of neighboring cities rising in every direction. It was from this commanding height, during the long and ter-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

rible summer days which were approaching, that many an eye was to be strained anxiously seaward, watching if yet the ocean had begun to roll over the land.

[In 1574, the Spaniards under Don Francis Valdez besieged Leyden, and built so many redoubts around the city that there was no hope of succor coming to it by land. Food was already becoming scarce when Philip offered to pardon his "erring subjects" if they would give up their religion and return to the Roman Catholic Church. Half starving as they were, they refused. William of Orange held the fortress of Poldermaert; between him and the besieged city a precarious communication was kept up by carrier-pigeons and venturesome messengers called "jumpers." The Netherlanders were weak on land, but on the sea they were irresistible, and William believed that the only way to save the city was to break down the dikes, open the sluice-gates, and allow the ocean to roll over the country. Then their fleet could sail over the submerged land and bring relief to the famishing city. The Hollanders agreed. "Better a drowned land than a lost land," they cried. Money, plate, and jewelry poured in that the work might progress. The dikes were pierced and the waters poured over the country. Admiral Boisot with eight hundred "Sea Beggars," as the rebel sailors were called, set out boldly on the new ocean to carry food to Leyden, but when almost within sight of the city the boats ran aground. Eighteen inches of water were needed to float them, and there was no chance of getting it unless the wind should shift to the west and roll the ocean in through the gaps in the dikes.]

Meantime, the besieged city was at its last gasp. The burghers had been in a state of uncertainty for many days; being aware that the fleet had set forth for their relief, but knowing full well the thousand obstacles which it had to surmount. They had guessed its

THE SIEGE OF LEYDEN

progress by the illumination from the blazing villages; they had heard its salvos of artillery on its arrival at North Aa; but since then, all had been dark and mournful again, hope and fear, in sickening alternation, distracting every breast. They knew that the wind was unfavorable, and at the dawn of each day every eye was turned wistfully to the vanes of the steeples. So long as the easterly breeze prevailed, they felt, as they anxiously stood on towers and housetops, that they must look in vain for the welcome ocean. Yet, while thus patiently waiting, they were literally starving; for even the misery endured at Harlem had not reached that depth and intensity of agony to which Leyden was now reduced. Bread, malt-cake, horse-flesh, had entirely disappeared; dogs, cats, rats, and other vermin, were esteemed luxuries. A small number of cows, kept as long as possible, for their milk, still remained; but a few were killed from day to day, and distributed in minute proportions, hardly sufficient to support life among the famishing population. Starving wretches swarmed daily around the shambles where these cattle were slaughtered, contending for any morsel which might fall, and lapping eagerly the blood as it ran along the pavement; while the hides, chopped and boiled, were greedily devoured. Women and children, all day long, were seen searching gutters and dunghills for morsels of food, which they disputed fiercely with the famishing dogs. The green leaves were stripped from the trees, every living herb was converted into human food, but these expedients could not avert starvation. The daily mortality was frightful — infants starved to death on the maternal breasts, which famine had parched and

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

withered; mothers dropped dead in the streets, with their dead children in their arms. In many a house the watchmen, in their rounds, found a whole family of corpses, father, mother, and children, side by side, for a disorder called the plague, naturally engendered of hardship and famine, now came, as if in kindness, to abridge the agony of the people. The pestilence stalked at noon-day through the city, and the doomed inhabitants fell like grass beneath its scythe. From six thousand to eight thousand human beings sank before this scourge alone, yet the people resolutely held out — women and men mutually encouraging each other to resist the entrance of their foreign foe — an evil more horrible than pest or famine.

The missives from Valdez, who saw more vividly than the besieged could do, the uncertainty of his own position, now poured daily into the city, the enemy becoming more prodigal of his vows, as he felt that the ocean might yet save the victims from his grasp. The inhabitants, in their ignorance, had gradually abandoned their hopes of relief, but they spurned the summons to surrender. Leyden was sublime in its despair. A few murmurs were, however, occasionally heard at the steadfastness of the magistrates, and a dead body was placed at the door of the burgomaster, as a silent witness against his inflexibility. A party of the more faint-hearted even assailed the heroic Adrian Van der Werf with threats and reproaches as he passed through the streets. A crowd had gathered around him, as he reached a triangular place in the center of the town, into which many of the principal streets emptied themselves, and upon one side of which stood the church of Saint Pancras, with its

THE SIEGE OF LEYDEN

high brick tower surmounted by two pointed turrets, and with two ancient lime trees at its entrance. There stood the burgomaster, a tall, haggard, imposing figure, with dark visage, and a tranquil but commanding eye. He waved his broad-leaved felt hat for silence, and then exclaimed in language which has been almost literally preserved, "What would ye, my friends? Why do ye murmur that we do not break our vows and surrender the city to the Spaniards? a fate more horrible than the agony which she now endures. I tell you I have made an oath to hold the city, and may God give me strength to keep my oath! I can die but once; whether by your hands, the enemy's, or by the hand of God. My own fate is indifferent to me, not so that of the city entrusted to my care. I know that we shall starve if not soon relieved; but starvation is preferable to the dishonored death which is the only alternative. Your menaces move me not; my life is at your disposal; here is my sword, plunge it into my breast, and divide my flesh among you. Take my body to appease your hunger, but expect no surrender, so long as I remain alive."

The words of the stout burgomaster inspired a new courage in the hearts of those who heard him, and a shout of applause and defiance arose from the famishing but enthusiastic crowd. They left the place, after exchanging new vows of fidelity with their magistrate, and again ascended tower and battlement to watch for the coming fleet. From the ramparts they hurled renewed defiance to the enemy. "Ye call us rat-eaters and dog-eaters," they cried, "and it is true. So long, then, as ye hear dog bark or cat mew within the walls, ye may know that the city holds out. And when all has perished but

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

ourselves, be sure that we will each devour our left arm retaining our right to defend our women, our liberty, and our religion, against the foreign tyrant. Should God, in his wrath, doom us to destruction, and deny us all relief, even then will we maintain ourselves forever against your entrance. When the last hour has come, with our own hands we will set fire to the city and perish, men, women, and children together in the flames, rather than suffer our homes to be polluted and our liberties to be crushed." Such words of defiance, thundered daily from the battlements, sufficiently informed Valdez as to his chance of conquering the city, either by force or fraud; but at the same time, he felt comparatively relieved by the inactivity of Boisot's fleet, which still lay stranded at North Aa. "As well," shouted the Spaniards derisively to the citizens, — "as well can the Prince of Orange pluck the stars from the sky as bring the ocean to the walls of Leyden for your relief."

On the 28th of September, a dove flew into the city, bringing a letter from Admiral Boisot. In this dispatch, the position of the fleet at North Aa was described in encouraging terms, and the inhabitants were assured that, in a very few days at farthest, the long-expected relief would enter their gates. The letter was read publicly upon the market-place, and the bells were rung for joy. Nevertheless, on the morrow, the vanes pointed to the east, the waters, so far from rising, continued to sink, and Admiral Boisot was almost in despair. He wrote to the prince, that if the spring-tide, now to be expected, should not, together with a strong and favorable wind, come immediately to their relief, it would be in vain to attempt anything further, and that the expedition

THE SIEGE OF LEYDEN

would of necessity, be abandoned. The tempest came to their relief. A violent equinoctial gale, on the night of the 1st and 2^d of October, came storming from the northwest, shifting after a few hours full eight points, and then blowing still more violently from the southwest. The waters of the North Sea were piled in vast masses upon the southern coast of Holland, and then dashed furiously landward, the ocean rising over the earth, and sweeping with unrestrained power across the ruined dikes.

In the course of twenty-four hours, the fleet at North Aa, instead of nine inches, had more than two feet of water. No time was lost. The Kirk-way, which had been broken through according to the prince's instructions, was now completely overflowed, and the fleet sailed at midnight, in the midst of the storm and darkness. A few sentinel vessels of the enemy challenged them as they steadily rowed towards Zoeterwoude. The answer was a flash from Boisot's cannon, lighting up the black waste of waters. There was a fierce midnight battle; a strange spectacle among the branches of those quiet orchards, and with the chimney stacks of half-submerged farmhouses rising around the contending vessels. The neighboring village of Zoeterwoude shook with the discharges of the Zealanders' cannon, and the Spaniards assembled in that fortress knew that the rebel admiral was at last afloat and on his course. The enemy's vessels were soon sunk, and their crews hurled into the waves. On went the fleet, sweeping over the broad waters which lay between Zoeterwoude and Zwieten. As they approached some shallows, which led into the great mere, the Zealanders dashed into the sea, and with

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

sheer strength shouldered every vessel through. Two obstacles lay still in their path — the forts of Zoeterwoude and Lammern, distant from the city five hundred and two hundred and fifty yards respectively. Strong redoubts, both well supplied with troops and artillery, they were likely to give a rough reception to the light flotilla, but the panic, which had hitherto driven their foes before the advancing patriots, had reached Zoeterwoude. Hardly was the fleet in sight when the Spaniards, in the early morning, poured out from the fortress, and fled precipitately to the left, along a road which led in a westerly direction towards The Hague. Their narrow path was rapidly vanishing in the waves, and hundreds sank beneath the constantly deepening and treacherous flood. The wild Zealanders, too, sprang from their vessels upon the crumbling dike and drove their retreating foes into the sea. They hurled their harpoons at them, with an accuracy acquired in many a polar chase; they plunged into the waves in the keen pursuit, attacking them with boat-hook and dagger. The numbers who thus fell beneath these corsairs, who neither gave nor took quarter, were never counted, but probably not less than a thousand perished. The rest effected their escape to The Hague.

The first fortress was thus seized, dismantled, set on fire, and passed, and a few strokes of the oars brought the whole fleet close to Lammern. This last obstacle rose formidable and frowning directly across their path. Swarming as it was with soldiers, and bristling with artillery, it seemed to defy the armada either to carry it by storm or to pass under its guns into the city. It appeared that the enterprise was, after all, to founder

THE SIEGE OF LEYDEN

within sight of the long expecting and expected haven. Boisot anchored his fleet within a respectful distance, and spent what remained of the day in carefully reconnoitering the fort, which seemed only too strong. In conjunction with Leyderdorp, the headquarters of Baldez, a mile and a half distant on the right, and within a mile of the city, it seemed so insuperable an impediment that Boisot wrote in despondent tone to the Prince of Orange. He announced his intention of carrying the fort, if it were possible, on the following morning; but if obliged to retreat, he observed, with something like despair, that there would be nothing for it but to wait for another gale of wind. If the waters should rise sufficiently to enable them to make a wide détour, it might be possible, if, in the mean time, Leyden did not starve or surrender, to enter its gates from the opposite side.

Meantime, the citizens had grown wild with expectation. A dove had been dispatched by Boisot, informing them of his precise position, and a number of citizens accompanied the burgomaster, at nightfall, towards the tower of Hengist.—“Yonder,” cried the burgomaster, stretching out his hand towards Lammern, “yonder, behind that fort, are bread and meat, and brethren in thousands. Shall all this be destroyed by the Spanish guns, or shall we rush to the rescue of our friends?” “We will tear the fortress to fragments with our teeth and nails,” was the reply, “before the relief, so long expected, shall be wrested from us.” It was resolved that a sortie, in conjunction with the operations of Boisot, should be made against Lammern with the earliest dawn. Night descended upon the scene, a pitch-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

dark night, full of anxiety to the Spaniards, to the armada, to Leyden. Strange sights and sounds occurred at different moments to bewilder the anxious sentinels. A long procession of lights issuing from the fort was seen to flit across the black face of the waters, in the dead of night, and the whole of the city wall, between the Cowgate and the Tower of Burgundy, fell with a loud crash. The horror-struck citizens thought that the Spaniards were upon them at last; the Spaniards imagined the noise to indicate a desperate sortie of the citizens. Everything was vague and mysterious.

Day dawned at length after the feverish night, and the admiral prepared for the assault. Within the fortress reigned a death-like stillness, which inspired a sickening suspicion. Had the city, indeed, been carried in the night; had the massacre already commenced; had all this labor and audacity been expended in vain? Suddenly a man was descried, wading breast-high through the water from Lammens towards the fleet, while at the same time, one solitary boy was seen to wave his cap from the summit of the fort. After a moment of doubt, the happy mystery was solved. The Spaniards had fled, panic-struck, during the darkness. Their position would still have enabled them, with firmness, to frustrate the enterprise of the patriots, but the hand of God, which had sent the ocean and the tempest to the deliverance of Leyden, had struck her enemies with terror likewise. The lights which had been seen moving during the night were the lanterns of the retreating Spaniards, and the boy who was now waving his triumphant signal from the battlements had alone witnessed the spectacle. So confident was he in the

THE SIEGE OF LEYDEN

conclusion to which it led him, that he had volunteered at daybreak to go thither all alone. The magistrates, fearing a trap, hesitated for a moment to believe the truth, which soon, however, became quite evident. Valdez, flying himself from Leyderdorp, had ordered Colonel Borgia to retire with all his troops from Lammern. Thus, the Spaniards had retreated at the very moment that an extraordinary accident had laid bare a whole side of the city for their entrance. The noise of the wall, as it fell, only inspired them with fresh alarm; for they believed that the citizens had sallied forth in the darkness, to aid the advancing flood in the work of destruction. All obstacles being now removed, the fleet of Boisot swept by Lammern and entered the city on the morning of the 3d of October. Leyden was relieved.

The quays were lined with the famishing population as the fleet rowed through the canals, every human being who could stand coming forth to greet the preservers of the city. Bread was thrown from every vessel among the crowd. The poor creatures who for two months had tasted no wholesome human food, and who had literally been living within the jaws of death, snatched eagerly the blessed gift, at last too liberally bestowed. Many choked themselves to death, in the greediness with which they devoured their bread; others became ill with the effect of plenty thus suddenly succeeding starvation; — but these were isolated cases, a repetition of which was prevented. The admiral, stepping ashore, was welcomed by the magistracy, and a solemn procession was immediately formed. Magistrates and citizens, wild Zealanders, emaciated burgher guards, sailors, soldiers, women, children — nearly every living person within the

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

walls, all repaired without delay to the great church, stout Admiral Boisot leading the way. The starving and heroic city, which had been so firm in its resistance to an earthly king, now bent itself in humble gratitude before the King of kings. After prayers the whole vast congregation joined in the thanksgiving hymn. Thousands of voices raised the song, but few were able to carry it to its conclusion, for the universal emotion, deepened by the music, became too full for utterance. The hymn was abruptly suspended, while the multitude wept like children. This scene of honest pathos terminated, the necessary measures for distributing the food and for relieving the sick were taken by the magistracy. A note dispatched to the Prince of Orange was received by him at two o'clock, as he sat in church at Delft. It was of a somewhat different purport from that of the letter which he had received early in the same day from Boisot; the letter in which the admiral had informed him that the success of the enterprise depended, after all, upon the desperate assault upon a nearly impregnable fort. The joy of the prince may be easily imagined, and so soon as the sermon was concluded, he handed the letter just received to the minister, to be read to the congregation. Thus all participated in his joy, and united with him in thanksgiving.

THE BATTLE OF IVRY

[1590]

BY THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

[WHEN Henry of Navarre, a Protestant, inherited the French crown, he was opposed by the Catholic Party, led by the Duke of Mayenne and aided by Spain and Savoy. In 1590, Henry gained a decisive victory over the Duke at Ivry. Just before the battle, he said to his troops, "My children, if you lose sight of your colors, rally to my white plume — you will always find it in the path to honor and glory." In 1593, Henry abjured Protestantism and was crowned king.

The Editor.]

Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories
are!

And glory to our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of Na-
varre!

Now let there be the merry sound of music and the dance,
Through thy cornfields green, and sunny vines, oh pleas-
ant land of France!

And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the
waters,

Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning
daughters.

As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy,
For cold, and stiff, and still are they who wrought thy
walls annoy.

Hurrah! hurrah! a single field hath turned the chance of
war;

Hurrah! hurrah! for Ivry and King Henry of Navarre.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Oh! how our hearts were beating, when at the dawn of
day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long
array;
With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish
spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our
land!
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his
hand;
And, as we looked on them, we thought of Seine's em-
purpled flood,
And good Coligny's hoary hair all dabbled with his
blood;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of
war,
To fight for his own holy name, and Henry of Navarre.

The king is come to marshal us, in all his armor drest,
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant
crest:
He looked upon his people, and a tear was in his eye;
He looked upon the traitors, and his glance was stern
and high.
Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from wing to
wing,
Down all our line, in deafening shout, "God save our
lord, the King."
"And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he
may—
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray —

THE BATTLE OF IVRY

Press where ye see my white plume shine, amidst the
ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme, to-day, the helmet of Navarre."

Hurrah! the foes are moving! Hark to the mingled
din
Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roaring
culverin!
The fiery Duke is pricking fast across Saint Andre's
plain,
With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and Almayne.
Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of
France,
Charge for the golden lilies now, upon them with the
lance!
A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand spears
in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-
white crest;
And in they burst, and on they rushed, while, like a
guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of Na-
varre.

Now God be praised, the day is ours! Mayenne hath
turned his rein,
D'Aumale hath cried for quarter — the Flemish Count
is slain,
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a Biscay
gale;
The field is heaped with bleeding steeds, and flags, and
cloven mail;

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

And then we thought on vengeance, and all along our van,
"Remember St. Bartholomew," was passed from man to man;
But out spake gentle Henry then, "No Frenchman is my foe;
Down, down with every foreigner; but let your brethren go."
Oh! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or in war,
As our sovereign lord, King Henry, the soldier of Navarre!

Ho! maidens of Vienna! Ho! matrons of Lucerne!
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who never shall return:
Ho! Philip, send for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for thy poor spearmen's souls!
Ho! gallant nobles of the League, look that your arms be bright!
Ho! burghers of St. Genevieve, keep watch and ward to-night!
For our God hath crushed the tyrant, our God hath raised the slave,
And mocked the counsel of the wise and the valor of the brave.
Then glory to his holy name, from whom all glories are;
And glory to our sovereign lord, King Henry of Navarre.

THE REVENGE: A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

BY ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

[IN 1591, three years after the defeat of the Invincible Armada, an English squadron was lying at the Azores to intercept treasure ships bringing back gold from the New World when a powerful Spanish fleet sailed into the bay. All of the English ships escaped but one, the Revenge. Her commander, Sir Richard Grenville, delayed until he could get his sick men aboard, and then tried to fight his way out alone.

The Editor.]

I

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came flying from far
away:
“Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-
three!”
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: “Fore God I am
no coward!
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out
of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow
quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-
three?”

II

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: “I know you are
no coward;
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.
But I’ve ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

I should count myself the coward if I left them, my
Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain."

III

So Lord Howard passed away with five ships of war
that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the
land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,
And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that they were not left
to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the
Lord.

IV

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to
fight,
And he sail'd away from Flores till the Spaniard came
in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather
bow.
"Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, let us know,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set."
And Sir Richard said again: "We be all good English
men.

THE REVENGE: A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

Let us hang these dogs of Seville, the children of the
Devil,
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or Devil yet."

V

Sir Richard spoke, and he laugh'd, and we roared a
hurrah, and so
The little Revenge ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick
below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left
were seen,
And the little Revenge ran on thro' the long sea-lane
between.

VI

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down from their
decks and laugh'd,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little
craft
Running on and on, till delay'd
By their mountain-like San Philip that, of fifteen hun-
dred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers
of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd.

VII

And while now the great San Philip hung above us
like a cloud
Whence the thunderboit will fall
Long and loud,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon the star-
board lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII

But anon the great San Philip she bethought herself
and went,
Having that within her womb that had left her ill-
content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us
hand to hand,
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and mus-
queteers,
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes
his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.

IX

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over
the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the
fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built
galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-
thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with
her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so
could fight us no more —

THE REVENGE: A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world
before?

X

For he said, "Fight on! fight on!"
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the summer night was
gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly
dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the
head,
And he said, "Fight on! fight on!"

XI

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far
over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us all
in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for they fear'd that
we still could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them
stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder
was all of it spent;

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

And the masts and rigging were lying over the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride:
“We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more,
At sea or ashore,
We die — does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner — sink her, split her
in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!”

XII

And the gunner said, “Aye, aye,” but the seamen made
reply:
“We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let
us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow.”
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe.

XIII

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him
then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught
at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly
foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:
“I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man
and true;

THE REVENGE: A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do;
With a joyful spirit I, Sir Richard Grenville, die!"
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

XIV

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant
and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and his English
few;
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew,
But they sank his body with honor down into the deep,
And they mann'd the Revenge with a swarthier alien
crew,
And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd for her own:
When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from
sleep,
And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earth-
quake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts
and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shatter'd
navy of Spain,
And the little Revenge herself went down by the island
craggs
To be lost evermore in the main.

THE STORMING OF THE SKY-CITY

[1599]

BY CHARLES F. LUMMIS

SOME of the most characteristic heroisms and hardships of the pioneers in our domain cluster about the wondrous rock of Acoma, the strange sky-city of the Quéres Pueblos. All the Pueblo cities were built in positions which Nature herself had fortified, — a necessity of the times, since they were surrounded by outnumbering hordes of the deadliest warriors in history; but Acoma was most secure of all. In the midst of a long valley, four miles wide, itself lined by almost insurmountable precipices, towers a lofty rock, whose top is about seventy acres in area, and whose walls, three hundred and fifty-seven feet high, are not merely perpendicular, but in most places even overhanging. Upon its summit was perched — and is to-day — the dizzy city of the Quéres. The few paths to the top — whereon a misstep will roll the victim to horrible death, hundreds of feet below — are by wild, precipitous clefts, at the head of which one determined man, with no other weapons than stones, could almost hold at bay an army.

This strange aerial town was first heard of by Europeans in 1539, when Fray Marcos, the discoverer of New Mexico, was told by the people of Cibola of the great rock fortress of Hákuque, — their name for Acoma, which the natives themselves call Ahko. In the following year Coronado visited it with his little army,

THE STORMING OF THE SKY-CITY

and has left us an accurate account of its wonders. These first Europeans were well received there; and the superstitious natives, who had never seen a beard or a white face before, took the strangers for gods. But it was more than half a century later yet before the Spaniards sought a foothold there.

When Oñate entered New Mexico in 1598, he met no immediate resistance whatever; for his force of four hundred people, including two hundred men-at-arms, was large enough to awe the Indians. They were naturally hostile to these invaders of their domain; but finding themselves well treated by the strangers, and fearful of open war against these men with hard clothes, who killed from afar with their thunder-sticks, the Pueblos awaited results. The Quéres, Tigua, and Jemez branches formally submitted to Spanish rule, and took the oath of allegiance to the Crown by their representative men gathered at the pueblo of Guipuy (now Santo Domingo); as also did the Tanos, Picuries, Tehuas, and Taos, at a similar conference at the pueblo of San Juan, in September, 1598. At this ready submission Oñate was greatly encouraged; and he decided to visit all the principal pueblos in person, to make them securer subjects of his sovereign. He had founded already the first town in New Mexico and the second in the United States,—San Gabriel de los Españoles, where Chamita stands to-day. Before starting on this perilous journey, he dispatched Juan de Zaldivar, his *maestro de campo*,¹ with fifty men to explore the vast, unknown plains to the east, and then to follow him.

Oñate and a small force left the lonely little Spanish

¹ Equivalent to our colonel.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

colony,— more than a thousand miles from any other town of civilized men,— October 6, 1598. First he marched to the pueblos in the great plains of the Salt Lakes, east of the Manzano mountains,— a thirsty journey of more than two hundred miles. Then returning to the pueblo of Puaray (opposite the present Bernalillo), he turned westward. On the 27th of the same month he camped at the foot of the lofty cliffs of Acoma. The *principales* (chief men) of the town came down from the rock, and took the solemn pledge of allegiance to the Spanish Crown. They were thoroughly warned of the deep importance and meaning of this step, and that if they violated their oath they would be regarded and treated as rebels against His Majesty; but they fully pledged themselves to be faithful vassals. They were very friendly, and repeatedly invited the Spanish commander and his men to visit their sky-city. In truth, they had had spies at the conferences in Santo Domingo and San Juan, and had decided that the most dangerous man among the invaders was Oñate himself. If *he* could be slain, they thought the rest of the pale strangers might be easily routed.

But Oñate knew nothing of their intended treachery; and on the following day he and his handful of men — leaving only a guard with the horses — climbed one of the breathless stone "ladders," and stood in Acoma. The officious Indians piloted them hither and yon, showing them the strange terraced houses of many stories in height, the great reservoirs in the eternal rock, and the dizzy brink which everywhere surrounded the eyrie of a town. At last they brought the Spaniards to where a huge ladder, projecting far aloft through a trapdoor in

THE STORMING OF THE SKY-CITY

the roof of a large house, indicated the *estufa*, or sacred council-chamber. The visitors mounted to the roof by a smaller ladder, and the Indians tried to have Oñate descend through the trapdoor. But the Spanish governor, noting that all was dark in the room below, and suddenly becoming suspicious, declined to enter; and as his soldiers were all about, the Indians did not insist. After a short visit in the pueblo the Spaniards descended the rock to their camp, and thence marched away on their long and dangerous journey to Moqui and Zuñi. That swift flash of prudence in Oñate's mind saved the history of New Mexico; for in that dark *estufa* was lying a band of armed warriors. Had he entered the room, he would have been slain at once; and his death was to be the signal for a general onslaught upon the Spaniards, all of whom must have perished in the unequal fight.

Returning from his march of exploration through the trackless and deadly plains, Juan de Zaldivar left San Gabriel on the 18th of November, to follow his commander-in-chief. He had but thirty men. Reaching the foot of the City in the Sky on the 4th of December, he was very kindly received by the Acomas, who invited him up into their town. Juan was a good soldier, as well as a gallant one, and well used to the tricks of Indian warfare; but for the first time in his life — and the last — he now let himself be deceived. Leaving half his little force at the foot of the cliff to guard the camp and horses, he himself went up with sixteen men. The town was so full of wonders, the people so cordial, that the visitors soon forgot whatever suspicions they may have had; and by degrees they scattered hither and yon to see the strange sights. The natives had been waiting

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

only for this; and when the war-chief gave the wild whoop, men, women, and children seized rocks and clubs, bows and flint-knives, and fell furiously upon the scattered Spaniards. It was a ghastly and an unequal fight the winter sun looked down upon that bitter afternoon in the cliff-city. Here and there, with back against the wall of one of those strange houses, stood a gray-faced, tattered, bleeding soldier, swinging his clumsy flintlock club-like, or hacking with desperate but unavailing sword at the dark, ravenous mob that hemmed him, while stones rained upon his bent visor, and clubs and cruel flints sought him from every side. There was no coward blood among that doomed band. They sold their lives dearly; in front of every one lay a sprawling heap of dead. But one by one the howling wave of barbarians drowned each grim, silent fighter, and swept off to swell the murderous flood about the next. Zaldivar himself was one of the first victims; and two other officers, six soldiers, and two servants fell in that uneven combat. The five survivors — Juan Tabaro, who was *alguacil-mayor*, with four soldiers — got at last together, and with superhuman strength fought their way to the edge of the cliff, bleeding from many wounds. But their savage foes still pressed them; and being too faint to carve their way to one of the "ladders," in the wildness of desperation the five sprang over the beetling cliff.

Never but once was recorded so frightful a leap as that of Tabaro and his four companions. Even if we presume that they had been so fortunate as to reach the very lowest point of the rock, it could not have been less than one hundred and fifty feet! And yet only one of

THE STORMING OF THE SKY-CITY

the five was killed by this inconceivable fall; the remaining four, cared for by their terrified companions in the camp, all finally recovered. It would be incredible, were it not established by absolute historical proof. It is probable that they fell upon one of the mounds of white sand which the winds had drifted against the foot of the cliffs in places.

Fortunately, the victorious savages did not attack the little camp. The survivors still had their horses, of which unknown brutes the Indians had a great fear. For several days the fourteen soldiers and their four half-dead companions camped under the overhanging cliff, where they were safe from missiles from above, hourly expecting an onslaught from the savages. They felt sure that this massacre of their comrades was but the prelude to a general uprising of the twenty-five or thirty thousand Pueblos; and regardless of the danger to themselves, they decided at last to break up into little bands, and separate, — some to follow their commander on his lonely march to Moqui, and warn him of his danger; and others to hasten over the hundreds of arid miles to San Gabriel and the defense of its women and babes, and to the missionaries who had scattered among the savages. This plan of self-devotion was successfully carried out. The little bands of three and four apiece bore the news to their countrymen; and by the end of the year 1598 all the surviving Spaniards in New Mexico were safely gathered in the hamlet of San Gabriel. The little town was built pueblo-fashion, in the shape of a hollow square. In the plaza within were planted the rude *pedreros* — small howitzers which fired a ball of stone — to command the gates; and upon the

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

roofs of the three-story adobe houses the brave women watched by day, and the men with their heavy flintlocks all through the winter nights, to guard against the expected attack. But the Pueblos rested on their arms. They were waiting to see what Oñate would do with Acoma, before they took final measures against the strangers.

It was a most serious dilemma in which Oñate now found himself. One need not have known half so much about the Indian character as did this gray, quiet Spaniard, to understand that he must signally punish the rebels for the massacre of his men, or abandon his colony and New Mexico altogether. If such an outrage went unpunished, the emboldened Pueblos would destroy the last Spaniard. On the other hand, how could he hope to conquer that impregnable fortress of rock? He had less than two hundred men; and only a small part of these could be spared for the campaign, lest the other Pueblos in their absence should rise and annihilate San Gabriel and its people. In Acoma there were full three hundred warriors, reinforced by at least a hundred Navajo braves.

But there was no alternative. The more he reflected and counseled with his officers, the more apparent it became that the only salvation was to capture the Quéres Gibraltar; and the plan was decided upon. Oñate naturally desired to lead in person this forlornest of forlorn hopes; but there was one who had even a better claim to the desperate honor than the captain-general,—and that one was the forgotten hero Vicente de Zaldivar, brother of the murdered Juan. He was *sargento-mayor* of the little army; and when he came to

THE STORMING OF THE SKY-CITY

Oñate and begged to be given the command of the expedition against Acoma, there was no saying him nay.

On the 12th of January, 1599, Vicente de Zaldivar left San Gabriel at the head of seventy men. Only a few of them had even the clumsy flintlocks of the day; the majority were not *arquebusiers* but *piquiers*, armed only with swords and lances, and clad in jackets of quilted cotton or battered mail. One small *pedrero*, lashed upon the back of a horse, was the only "artillery."

Silently and sternly the little force made its arduous march. All knew that impregnable rock, and few cherished an expectation of returning from so desperate a mission; but there was no thought of turning back. On the afternoon of the eleventh day the tired soldiers passed the last intervening mesa, and came in sight of Acoma. The Indians, warned by their runners, were ready to receive them. The whole population, with the Navajo allies, were under arms, on the housetops and the commanding cliffs. Naked savages, painted black, leaped from crag to crag, screeching defiance and heapings insults upon the Spaniards. The medicine-men, hideously disguised, stood on projecting pinnacles, beating their drums and scattering curses and incantations to the winds; and all the populace joined in derisive howls and taunts.

Zaldivar halted his little band as close to the foot of the cliff as he could without danger. The indispensable notary stepped from the ranks, and at the blast of the trumpet proceeded to read at the top of his lungs the formal summons in the name of the King of Spain to surrender. Thrice he shouted through the summons; but each time his voice was drowned by the howls and

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

shrieks of the enraged savages, and a hail of stones and arrows fell dangerously near. Zaldivar had desired to secure the surrender of the pueblo, demand the delivery to him of the ringleaders in the massacre, and take them back with him to San Gabriel for official trial and punishment; without harm to the other people of Acoma; but the savages, secure in their grim fortress, mocked the merciful appeal. It was clear that Acoma must be stormed. The Spaniards camped on the bare sands and passed the night — made hideous by the sounds of a monster war-dance in the town — in gloomy plans for the morrow.

At daybreak, on the morning of January 22, Zaldivar gave the signal for the attack; and the main body of the Spaniards began firing their few arquebuses, and making a desperate assault at the north end of the great rock, there absolutely impregnable. The Indians, crowded along the cliffs above, poured down a rain of missiles; and many of the Spaniards were wounded. Meanwhile twelve picked men, who had hidden during the night under the overhanging cliff which protected them alike from the fire and the observation of the Indians, were crawling stealthily around under the precipice, dragging the *pedrero* by ropes. Most of these twelve were arquebusiers; and besides the weight of the ridiculous little cannon, they had their ponderous flintlocks and their clumsy armor, — poor helps for scaling heights which the unencumbered athlete finds difficult. Pursuing their toilsome way unobserved, pulling one another and then the *pedrero* up the ledges, they reached at last the top of a great outlying pinnacle of rock, separated from the main cliff of Acoma by a narrow but awful chasm. Late in

THE STORMING OF THE SKY-CITY

the afternoon they had their howitzer trained upon the town; and the loud report, as its cobble-stone ball flew into Acoma, signaled the main body at the north end of the mesa that the first vantage-ground had been safely gained, and, at the same time warned the savages of danger from a new quarter.

That night little squads of Spaniards climbed the great precipices which wall the trough-like valley on east and west, cut down small pines, and with infinite labor dragged the logs down the cliffs, across the valley, and up the butte on which the twelve were stationed. About a score of men were left to guard the horses at the north end of the mesa; and the rest of the force joined the twelve, hiding behind the crags of their rock-tower. Across the chasm the Indians were lying in crevices, or behind rocks, awaiting the attack.

At daybreak of the 23d, a squad of picked men at a given signal rushed from their hiding-places with a log on their shoulders, and by a lucky cast lodged its farther end on the opposite brink of the abyss. Out dashed the Spaniards at their heels, and began balancing across that dizzy "bridge" in the face of a volley of stones and arrows. A very few had crossed, when one in his excitement caught the rope and pulled the log across after him.

It was a fearful moment. There were less than a dozen Spaniards thus left standing alone on the brink of Acoma, cut off from their companions by a gulf hundreds of feet deep, and surrounded by swarming savages. The Indians, sallying from their refuge, fell instantly upon them on every hand. As long as the Spanish soldier could keep the Indians at a distance, even his

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

clumsy firearms and inefficient armor gave an advantage; but at such close quarters these very things were a fatal impediment by their weight and clumsiness. Now it seemed as if the previous Acoma massacre were to be repeated, and the cut-off Spaniards to be hacked to pieces; but at this very crisis a deed of surpassing personal valor saved them and the cause of Spain in New Mexico. A slender, bright-faced young officer, a college boy who was a special friend and favorite of Oñate, sprang from the crowd of dismayed Spaniards on the farther bank, who dared not fire into that indiscriminate jostle of friend and foe, and came running like a deer toward the chasm. As he reached its brink his lithe body gathered itself, sprang into the air like a bird, and cleared the gulf! Seizing the log, he thrust it back with desperate strength until his companions could grasp it from the farther brink; and over the restored bridge the Spanish soldiers poured to retrieve the day.

Then began one of the most fearful hand-to-hand struggles in all American history. Outnumbered nearly ten to one, lost in a howling mob of savages who fought with the frenzy of despair, gashed with raw-edged knives, dazed with crushing clubs, pierced with bristling arrows, spent and faint and bleeding, Zaldivar and his hero-handful fought their way inch by inch, step by step, clubbing their heavy guns, hewing with their short swords, parrying deadly blows, pulling the barbed arrows from their quivering flesh. On, on, on they pressed, shouting the gallant war-cry of Santiago, driving the stubborn foe before them by still more stubborn valor, until at last the Indians, fully convinced that these were no human foes, fled to the refuge of their

THE STORMING OF THE SKY-CITY

fort-like houses, and there was room for the reeling Spaniards to draw breath. Then thrice again the summons to surrender was duly read before the strange tenements, each near a thousand feet long, and looking like a flight of gigantic steps carved from one rock. Zaldivar even now wished to spare unnecessary bloodshed, and demanded only that the assassins of his brother and countrymen should be given up for punishment. All others who should surrender and become subjects of "Our Lord the King" should be well treated. But the dogged Indians, like wounded wolves in their den, stuck in their barricaded houses, and refused all terms of peace.

The rock was captured, but the town remained. A *pueblo* is a fortress in itself; and now Zaldivar had to storm Acoma house by house and room by room. The little *pedrero* was dragged in front of the first row of houses, and soon began to deliver its slow fire. As the adobe walls crumbled under the steady battering of the stone cannon-balls, they only formed great barricades of clay, which even our modern artillery would not pierce; and each had to be carried separately at the point of the sword. Some of the fallen houses caught fire from their own *fogones*;¹ and soon a stifling smoke hung over the town, from which issued the shrieks of women and babes and the defiant yells of the warriors. The humane Zaldivar made every effort to save the women and children, at great risk of self; but numbers perished beneath the falling walls of their own houses.

This fearful storming lasted until noon of January 24. Now and then bands of warriors made sorties, and tried

¹ Fireplaces.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

to cut their way through the Spanish line. Many sprang in desperation over the cliff, and were dashed to pieces at its foot; and two Indians who made that incredible leap survived it as miraculously as had the four Spaniards in the earlier massacre, and made their escape.

At last, at noon of the third day, the old men came forth to sue for mercy, which was at once granted. The moment they surrendered, their rebellion was forgotten and their treachery forgiven. There was no need of further punishment. The ringleaders in the murder of Zaldivar's brother were all dead, and so were nearly all the Navajo allies. It was the most bloody struggle New Mexico ever saw. In this three days' fight the Indians lost five hundred slain and many wounded; and of the surviving Spaniards not one but bore to his grave many a ghastly scar as mementos of Acoma. The town was so nearly destroyed that it had all to be rebuilt; and the infinite labor with which the patient people had brought up that cliff on their backs all the stones and timber and clay to build a many-storied town for nearly a thousand souls was all to be repeated. Their crops, too, and all other supplies, stored in dark little rooms of the terraced houses, had been destroyed, and they were in sore want. Truly a bitter punishment had been sent them by "those above" for their treachery to Juan de Zaldivar.

When his men had sufficiently recovered from their wounds, Vicente de Zaldivar, the leader of probably the most wonderful capture in history, marched victorious back to San Gabriel de los Espanoles, taking with him eighty young Acoma girls, whom he sent to be educated by the nuns in Old Mexico. What a shout must have gone up from the gray walls of the little colony when its

THE STORMING OF THE SKY-CITY

anxious watchers saw at last the wan and unexpected tatters of its little army pricking slowly homeward across the snows on jaded steeds!

The rest of the Pueblos, who had been lying demure as cats, with claws sheathed, but every lithe muscle ready to spring, were fairly paralyzed with awe. They had looked to see the Spaniards defeated, if not crushed, at Acoma; and then a swift rising of all the tribes would have made short work of the remaining invaders. But now the impossible had happened! Ah̄ko, the proud sky-city of the Quéres; Ah̄ko, the cliff-girt and impregnable, — had fallen before the pale strangers! Its brave warriors had come to naught, its strong houses were a chaos of smoking ruins, its wealth was gone, its people nearly wiped from off the earth! What use to struggle against “such men of power,” — these strange wizards who must be precious to “those above,” else they never could have such superhuman prowess? The strong sinews relaxed, and the great cat began to purr as though she had never dreamed of mousing. There was no more thought of a rebellion against the Spaniards; and the Indians even went out of their way to court the favor of these awesome strangers. They brought Oñate the news of the fall of Acoma several days before Zaldivar and his heroes got back to the little colony, and even were mean enough to deliver to him two Quéres refugees from that dread field who had sought shelter among them. Thenceforth Governor Oñate had no more trouble with the Pueblos.

But Acoma itself seemed to take the lesson to heart less than any of them. Too crushed and broken to think of further war with its invincible foes, it still remained

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

bitterly hostile to the Spaniards for full thirty years, until it was again conquered by a heroism as splendid as Zaldivar's, though in a far different way.

In 1629, Fray Juan Ramirez, "the Apostle of Acoma," left Santa Fé alone to found a mission in that lofty home of fierce barbarians. An escort of soldiers was offered him, but he declined it, and started unaccompanied and on foot, with no other weapon than his crucifix. Tramping his footsore and dangerous way, he came after many days to the foot of the great "island" of rock, and began the ascent. As soon as the savages saw a stranger of the hated people, they rallied to the brink of the cliff and poured down a great flight of arrows, some of which pierced his robes. Just then a little girl of Acoma, who was standing on the edge of the cliff, grew frightened at the wild actions of her people, and losing her balance tumbled over the precipice. By a strange providence she fell but a few yards, and landed on a sandy ledge near the *fray*, but out of sight of her people, who presumed that she had fallen the whole height of the cliff. Fray Juan climbed to her, and carried her unhurt to the top of the rock; and seeing this apparent miracle, the savages were disarmed, and received him as a good wizard. The good man dwelt alone there in Acoma for more than twenty years, loved by the natives as a father, and teaching his swarthy converts so successfully that in time many knew their catechism, and could read and write in Spanish. Besides, under his direction they built a large church with enormous labor. When he died, in 1664, the Acomas from being the fiercest Indians had become the gentlest in New Mexico, and were among the farthest advanced in civilization.

THE STORMING OF THE SKY-CITY

But a few years after his death came the uprising of all the Pueblos; and in the long and disastrous wars which followed the church was destroyed, and the fruits of the brave *fray's* work largely disappeared. In that rebellion Fray Lucas Maldonado, who was then the missionary to Acoma, was butchered by his flock on the 10th or 11th of August, 1680. In November, 1692, Acoma voluntarily surrendered to the reconqueror of New Mexico, Diego de Vargas. Within a few years, however, it rebelled again; and in August, 1696, Vargas marched against it, but was unable to storm the rock. But by degrees the Pueblos grew to lasting peace with the humane conquerors, and to merit the kindness which was steadily proffered them. The mission at Acoma was reestablished about the year 1700; and there stands to-day a huge church which is one of the most interesting in the world, by reason of the infinite labor and patience which built it. The last attempt at a Pueblo uprising was in 1828; but Acoma was not implicated in it at all.

The strange stone stairway, by which Fray Juan Ramirez climbed first to his dangerous parish in the teeth of a storm of arrows, is used by the people of Acoma to this day, and is still called by them *el camino del padre* (the path of the father).

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS AT LÜTZEN

[1632]

BY JOHANN CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER

[DURING the Thirty Years' War, in Germany, the Protestants had long hoped that Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, would become their leader; but he felt that he must first care for the needs of his country. At length, however, the time came when he saw that his own land was in danger. Then he led his army into Germany, and there he was joined by the allied forces of the Protestant princes. At Lützen he met the troops of the Austrian Emperor under Wallenstein. On the outcome of this battle depended the fate of Protestant Germany.

The Editor.]

At last the fateful morning dawned; but an impenetrable fog, which spread over the plain, delayed the attack till noon. Kneeling in front of his lines, the king offered up his devotions; and the whole army, at the same moment dropping on their knees, burst into a moving hymn, accompanied by the military music. The king then mounted his horse, and, clad only in a leathern doublet and surtout (for a wound he had formerly received prevented his wearing armor), rode along the ranks, to animate the courage of his troops with a joyful confidence, which, however, the foreboding presentiment of his own bosom contradicted. "God with us!" was the war-cry of the Swedes; "Jesus Maria!" that of the imperialists. About eleven the fog began to disperse, and the enemy became visible. At the same mo-

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS AT LÜTZEN

ment Lützen was seen in flames, having been set on fire by command of the duke, to prevent his being outflanked on that side. The charge was now sounded; the cavalry rushed upon the enemy, and the infantry advanced against the trenches.

Received by a tremendous fire of musketry and heavy artillery, these intrepid battalions maintained the attack with undaunted courage, till the enemy's musketeers abandoned their posts, the trenches were passed, the battery carried and turned against the enemy. They pressed forward with irresistible impetuosity; the first of the five imperial brigades was immediately routed, the second soon after, and the third put to flight. But here the genius of Wallenstein opposed itself to their progress. With the rapidity of lightning he was on the spot to rally his discomfited troops; and his powerful word was itself sufficient to stop the flight of the fugitives. Supported by three regiments of cavalry, the vanquished brigades, forming anew, faced the enemy, and pressed vigorously into the broken ranks of the Swedes. A murderous conflict ensued. The nearness of the enemy left no room for firearms, the fury of the attack no time for loading; man was matched to man, the useless musket exchanged for the sword and pike, and science gave way to desperation. Overpowered by numbers, the wearied Swedes at last retired beyond the trenches; and the captured battery is again lost by the retreat. A thousand mangled bodies already strewed the plain, and as yet not a single step of ground had been won.

In the mean time the king's right wing, led by himself, had fallen upon the enemy's left. The first impet-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

uous shock of the heavy Finland cuirassiers dispersed the lightly mounted Poles and Croats, who were posted here, and their disorderly flight spread terror and confusion among the rest of the cavalry. At this moment notice was brought the king, that his infantry were retreating over the trenches, and also that his left wing, exposed to a severe fire from the enemy's cannon posted at the windmills, was beginning to give way. With rapid decision he committed to General Horn the pursuit of the enemy's left, while he flew, at the head of the regiment of Steinbock, to repair the disorder of his right wing. His noble charger bore him with the velocity of lightning across the trenches, but the squadrons that followed could not come on with the same speed, and only a few horsemen, among whom was Francis Albert, Duke of Saxe-Lauenburg, were able to keep up with the king. He rode directly to the place where his infantry were most closely pressed, and while he was reconnoitering the enemy's line for an exposed point of attack, the shortness of his sight unfortunately led him too close to their ranks. An imperial *gefreyter* [corporal], remarking that every one respectfully made way for him as he rode along, immediately ordered a musketeer to take aim at him. "Fire at him yonder," said he; "that must be a man of consequence." The soldier fired, and the king's left arm was shattered. At that moment his squadron came hurrying up, and a confused cry of "The king bleeds! the king is shot!" spread terror and consternation through all the ranks. "It is nothing — follow me," cried the king, collecting his whole strength; but overcome by pain, and nearly fainting, he requested the Duke of Lauenburg, in French, to lead him unob-

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS AT LÜTZEN

served out of the tumult. While the duke proceeded toward the right wing with the king, making a long circuit to keep this discouraging sight from the disordered infantry, his Majesty received a second shot through the back, which deprived him of his remaining strength. "Brother," said he, with a dying voice, "I have enough! look only to your own life." At the same moment he fell from his horse pierced by several more shots; and abandoned by all his attendants, he breathed his last amid the plundering hands of the Croats. His charger, flying without its rider, and covered with blood, soon made known to the Swedish cavalry the fall of their king. They rushed madly forward to rescue his sacred remains from the hands of the enemy. A murderous conflict ensued over the body, till his mangled remains were buried beneath a heap of slain.

The mournful tidings soon ran through the Swedish army; but, instead of destroying the courage of those brave troops, it but excited it into a new, a wild, a consuming flame. Life had lessened in value, now that the most sacred life of all was gone; death had no terrors for the lowly, since the anointed head was not spared. With the fury of lions the Upland, Småland, Finland, East and West Gothland regiments rushed a second time upon the left wing of the enemy, which, already making but feeble resistance to General Horn, was now entirely beaten from the field. Bernard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, gave to the bereaved Swedes a noble leader in his own person; and the spirit of Gustavus led his victorious squadrons anew. The left wing quickly formed again, and vigorously pressed the right of the imperialists. The artillery at the windmills, which had maintained

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

so murderous a fire upon the Swedes, was captured and turned against the enemy. The center, also, of the Swedish infantry, commanded by the duke and Knyphausen, advanced a second time against the trenches, which they successfully passed, and retook the battery of seven cannons. The attack was now renewed with redoubled fury upon the heavy battalions of the enemy's center; their resistance became gradually less, and chance conspired with Swedish valor to complete the defeat. The imperial powder-wagons took fire, and, with a tremendous explosion, grenades and bombs filled the air.

The enemy, now in confusion, thought they were attacked in the rear, while the Swedish brigades pressed them in front. Their courage began to fail them. Their left wing was already beaten, their right wavering, and their artillery in the enemy's hands. The battle seemed to be almost decided; another moment would decide the fate of the day, when Pappenheim appeared on the field, with his cuirassiers and dragoons; all the advantages already gained were lost, and the battle was to be fought anew.

The order which recalled that general to Lützen had reached him in Halle, while his troops were still plundering the town. It was impossible to collect the scattered infantry with that rapidity, which the urgency of the order and Pappenheim's impatience required. Without waiting for it, therefore, he ordered eight regiments of cavalry to mount; and at their head he galloped at full speed for Lützen, to share in the battle. He arrived in time to witness the flight of the imperial right wing, which Gustavus Horn was driving from the field, and to

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS AT LÜTZEN

be at first involved in their rout. But with rapid presence of mind he rallied the flying troops, and led them once more against the enemy. Carried away by his wild bravery, and impatient to encounter the king, who he supposed was at the head of this wing, he burst furiously upon the Swedish ranks, which, exhausted by victory, and inferior in numbers, were, after a noble resistance, overpowered by this fresh body of enemies. Pappenheim's unexpected appearance revived the drooping courage of the imperialists, and the Duke of Friedland quickly availed himself of the favorable moment to re-form his line. The closely serried battalions of the Swedes were, after a tremendous conflict, again driven across the trenches; and the battery, which had been twice lost, again rescued from their hands. The whole yellow regiment, the finest of all that distinguished themselves in this dreadful day, lay dead on the field, covering the ground almost in the same excellent order which, when alive, they maintained with such unyielding courage. The same fate befell another regiment of Blues, which Count Piccolomini attacked with the imperial cavalry, and cut down after a desperate contest. Seven times did this intrepid general renew the attack; seven horses were shot under him and he himself was pierced with six musket balls; yet he would not leave the field, until he was carried along in the general rout of the whole army. Wallenstein himself was seen riding through his ranks with cool intrepidity, amidst a shower of balls, assisting the distressed, encouraging the valiant with praise, and the wavering by his fearful glance. Around and close by him his men were falling thick, and his own mantle was perforated

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

by several shots. But avenging destiny this day protected that breast, for which another weapon was reserved; on the same field where the noble Gustavus expired, Wallenstein was not allowed to terminate his guilty career.

Less fortunate was Pappenheim, the Telamon of the army, the bravest soldier of Austria and the Church. An ardent desire to encounter the king in person, carried this daring leader into the thickest of the fight, where he thought his noble opponent was most surely to be met. Gustavus had also expressed a wish to meet his brave antagonist, but these hostile wishes remained ungratified; death first brought together these two great heroes. Two musket-balls pierced the breast of Pappenheim; and his men forcibly carried him from the field. While they were conveying him to the rear, a murmur reached him that he whom he had sought lay dead upon the plain. When the truth of the report was confirmed to him, his look became brighter, his dying eye sparkled with a last gleam of joy. "Tell the Duke of Friedland," said he, "that I lie without hope of life, but that I die happy, since I know that the implacable enemy of my religion has fallen on the same day."

With Pappenheim, the good fortune of the imperialists departed. The cavalry of the left wing, already beaten, and only rallied by his exertions, no sooner missed their victorious leader, than they gave up everything for lost, and abandoned the field of battle in spiritless despair. The right wing fell into the same confusion, with the exception of a few regiments, which the bravery of their colonels Gotz, Terzky, Colloredo, and Piccolomini, compelled to keep their ground. The Swed-

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS AT LÜTZEN

ish infantry, with prompt determination, profited by the enemy's confusion. To fill up the gaps which death had made in the front line, they formed both lines into one, and with it made the final and decisive charge. A third time they crossed the trenches, and a third time they captured the battery. The sun was setting when the two lines closed. The strife grew hotter as it drew to an end; the last efforts of strength were mutually exerted, and skill and courage did their utmost to repair in these precious moments the fortune of the day. It was in vain; despair endows every one with superhuman strength; no one can conquer, no one will give way. The art of war seemed to exhaust its powers on one side, only to unfold some new and untried masterpiece of skill on the other. Night and darkness at last put an end to the fight, before the fury of the combatants was exhausted; and the contest only ceased when no one could any longer find an antagonist. Both armies separated, as if by tacit agreement; the trumpets sounded, and each party claiming the victory, quitted the field.

The artillery on both sides, as the horses could not be found, remained all night upon the field, at once the reward and the evidence of victory to him who should hold it. Wallenstein, in his haste to leave Leipzig and Saxony, forgot to remove his part. Not long after the battle was ended, Pappenheim's infantry, who had been unable to follow the rapid movements of their general, and who amounted to six regiments, marched on the field, but the work was done. A few hours earlier, so considerable a reinforcement would perhaps have decided the day in favor of the imperialists; and, even now, by remaining on the field, they might have saved

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

the duke's artillery, and made a prize of that of the Swedes. But they had received no orders to act; and, uncertain as to the issue of the battle, they retired to Leipzig, where they hoped to join the main body.

The Duke of Friedland had retreated thither, and was followed on the morrow by the scattered remains of his army, without artillery, without colors, and almost without arms. The Duke of Weimar, it appears, after the toils of this bloody day, allowed the Swedish army some repose, between Lützen and Weissenfels, near enough to the field of battle to oppose any attempt the enemy might make to recover it. Of the two armies, more than nine thousand men lay dead; a still greater number were wounded, and among the imperialists, scarcely a man escaped from the field uninjured. The entire plain from Lützen to the Canal was strewed with the wounded, the dying, and the dead. Many of the principal nobility had fallen on both sides. Even the Abbot of Fulda, who had mingled in the combat as a spectator, paid for his curiosity and his ill-timed zeal with his life. History says nothing of prisoners; a further proof of the animosity of the combatants, who neither gave nor took quarter.

But it was a dear conquest, a dearer triumph! It was not till the fury of the conquest was over, that the full weight of the loss sustained was felt, and the shout of triumph died away into a silent, gloomy despair. He who had led them to the charge, returned not with them; there he lies upon the field which he had won, mingled with the dead bodies of the common crowd. After a long and almost fruitless search, the corpse of the

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS AT LÜTZEN

king was discovered, not far from the great stone, which, for a hundred years before, had stood between Lützen and the Canal, and which, from the memorable disaster of that day, still bears the name of the Stone of the Swedes. Covered with blood and wounds, so as scarcely to be recognized, trampled beneath the horses' hoofs, stripped by the rude hands of plunderers of its ornaments and clothes, his body was drawn from beneath a heap of dead, conveyed to Weissenfels, and there delivered up to the lamentations of his soldiers and the last embraces of his queen. The first tribute had been paid to revenge, and blood had atoned for the blood of the monarch; but now affection assumed its rights, and tears of grief must flow for the man. The universal sorrow absorbs all individual woes. The generals, still stupefied by the unexpected blow, stood speechless and motionless around his bier, and no one trusted himself enough to contemplate the full extent of their loss.

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

BY OBADIAH BIND-THEIR-KINGS-IN-CHAINS-AND-THEIR-
NOBLES-WITH-LINKS-OF-IRON, SERGEANT IN
IRETON'S REGIMENT

[1645]

BY THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

[THE army of Cromwell was of remarkable caliber. High wages were given to the soldiers, and only those who were sober and God-fearing were permitted to join its ranks. Oaths, theft, gambling, and drunkenness were unknown. As Macaulay says, "The most rigid discipline was found in company with the wildest enthusiasm."

One peculiarity of the Puritan was his choice of given names for his children. He was not satisfied with simple Biblical names of one word, but frequently adopted a whole phrase, such as Zeal-of-the-Land, Praise-God, etc.

The battle of Naseby, between the forces of Charles I and those of Cromwell, resulted in the utter defeat of the king. The royal army was nearly annihilated. The "Man of Blood" was the name given by the Puritans to King Charles.

The Editor.]

OH! wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the
North,
With your hands and your feet and your raiment all
red?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous
shout?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which ye
tread?

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

Oh, evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the
strong,
Who sat in the high places, and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance, and their cuirasses
shine,
And the Man of Blood was there with his long essenced
hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the
Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,
The general rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swelled into
a shout,
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line!
For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the Laws!
For Charles, King of England, and Rupert of the
Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his
drums,
His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes, close
your ranks,
For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We are
gone!

Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.
O Lord, put forth Thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back in God's name, and fight it to the
last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound, the center hath given
ground:

Hark! hark! — what means the trampling of horse-
men on our rear?

Whose banner do I see, boys? 'T is he, thank God, 't is
he, boys!

Bear up another minute: brave Oliver is here.

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a
row,

Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the
dikes,

Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the accurst,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple
Bar:

And he — he turns, he flies: shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on
war!

Ho! comrades, scour the plain, and, ere ye strip the
slain,

First give another stab to make your search secure,

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broadpieces
and lockets,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts
were gay and bold,
When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans to-
day;
And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in the
rocks,
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven and
hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your
blades;
Your perfumed satin clothes, your catches and your
oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds
and your spades?

Down, down, forever down with the miter and the
crown,
With the Belial of the court, and the Mammon of the
Pope;
There is woe in Oxford halls: there is wail in Durham's
stalls:
The Jesuit smites his bosom: the bishop rends his
cope.
And she of the seven hills shall mourn her children's ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's
sword;

ENGLAND

And the kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they
hear

What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses
and the Word.

GRANDMOTHER'S STORY OF BUNKER-HILL
BATTLE

[1775]

AS SHE SAW IT FROM THE BELFRY
BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

'T is like stirring living embers when, at eighty, one
remembers
All the aches and the quakings of "the times that tried
men's souls;"
When I talk of *Whig* and *Tory*, when I tell the *Rebel*
story,
To you the words are ashes, but to me they're burning
coals.

I had heard the muskets' rattle of the April running
battle;
Lord Percy's hunted soldiers, I can see their red coats still;
But a deadly chill comes o'er me, as the day looms up
before me,
When a thousand men lay bleeding on the slopes of
Bunker's Hill.

'T was a peaceful summer's morning, when the first
thing gave us warning
Was the booming of the cannon from the river and the
shore:
"Child," says grandma, "what 's the matter, what is all
this noise and clatter?
Have those scalping Indian devils come to murder us
once more?"

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Poor old soul! my sides were shaking in the midst of all
my quaking,
To hear her talk of Indians when the guns began to roar:
She had seen the burning village, and the slaughter and
the pillage,
When the Mohawks killed her father with their bullets
through his door.

Then I said, "Now, dear old granny, don't you fret and
worry any,
For I'll soon come back and tell you whether this is work
or play;
There can't be mischief in it, so I won't be gone a
minute"—
For a minute then I started. I was gone the livelong day.

No time for bodice-lacing or for looking-glass grimacing;
Down my hair went as I hurried, tumbling half-way to
my heels;
God forbid your ever knowing, when there's blood
around her flowing,
How the lonely, helpless daughter of a quiet household
feels!

In the street I heard a thumping; and I knew it was the
stumping
Of the Corporal, our old neighbor, on that wooden leg he
wore,
With a knot of women round him,—it was lucky I had
found him,
So I followed with the others, and the Corporal marched
before.

GRANDMOTHER'S STORY OF BUNKER HILL

They were making for the steeple, — the old soldier and
his people;

The pigeons circled round us as we climbed the creaking
stair,

Just across the narrow river — O, so close it made me
shiver! —

Stood a fortress on the hilltop that but yesterday was bare.

Not slow our eyes to find it; well we knew who stood
behind it,

Though the earthwork hid them from us, and the stub-
born walls were dumb:

Here were sister, wife, and mother, looking wild upon
each other,

And their lips were white with terror as they said, THE
HOUR HAS COME!

The morning slowly wasted, not a morsel had we tasted,
And our heads were almost splitting with the cannons'
deafening thrill,

When a figure tall and stately round the rampart strode
sedately;

It was PRESCOTT, one since told me; he commanded on
the hill.

Every woman's heart grew bigger when we saw his
manly figure,

With the banyan buckled round it, standing up so
straight and tall;

Like a gentleman of leisure who is strolling out for
pleasure,

Through the storm of shells and cannon-shot he walked
around the wall.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

At eleven the streets were swarming, for the red-coats'
ranks were forming;
At noon in marching order they were moving to the piers;
How the bayonets gleamed and glistened, as we looked
far down, and listened
To the trampling and the drum-beat of the belted
grenadiers!

At length the men have started, with a cheer (it seemed
faint-hearted),
In their scarlet regimentals, with their knapsacks on
their backs,
And the reddening, rippling water, as after a sea-fight's
slaughter,
Round the barges gliding onward blushed like blood
along their tracks.

So they crossed to the other border, and again they
formed in order;
And the boats came back for soldiers, came for soldiers,
soldiers still:
The time seemed everlasting to us women faint and
fasting,—
At last they're moving, marching, marching proudly up
the hill.

We can see the bright steel glancing all along the lines
advancing —
Now the front rank fires a volley — they have thrown
away their shot;
For behind their earthwork lying, all the balls above
them flying,
Our people need not hurry; so they wait and answer not.

GRANDMOTHER'S STORY OF BUNKER HILL

Then the Corporal, our old cripple (he would swear sometimes and tipple), —

He had heard the bullets whistle (in the old French war) before, —

Calls out in words of jeering, just as if they all were hearing, —

And his wooden leg thumps fiercely on the dusty belfry floor: —

“O! fire away, ye villains, and earn King George’s shillin’s,

But ye ’ll waste a ton of powder afore a ‘rebel’ falls;
You may bang the dirt and welcome, they’re as safe as Dan'l Malcolm

Ten foot beneath the gravestone that you’ve splintered with your balls!”

In the hush of expectation, in the awe and trepidation Of the dread approaching moment, we are wellnigh breathless all;

Though the rotten bars are failing on the rickety belfry railing,

We are crowding up against them like the waves against a wall.

Just a glimpse (the air is clearer), they are nearer, — nearer, — nearer,

When a flash — a curling smoke wreath — then a crash — the steeple shakes —

The deadly truce is ended; the tempest’s shroud is rended;

Like a morning mist it gathered, like a thunder-cloud it breaks!

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

O the sight our eyes discover as the blue-black smoke
blows over!

The red-coats stretched in windrows as a mower rakes
his hay;

Here a scarlet heap is lying, there a headlong crowd is flying
Like a billow that has broken and is shivered into spray.

Then we cried, "The troops are routed! they are beat —
it can't be doubted!"

God be thanked, the fight is over!" — Ah! the grim old
soldier's smile!

"Tell us, tell us why you look so?" (we could hardly
speak, we shook so), —

"Are they beaten? *Are* they beaten? *ARE* they
beaten?" — "Wait a while."

O the trembling and the terror! for too soon we saw our
error;

They are baffled, not defeated; we have driven them
back in vain;

And the columns that were scattered, round the colors
that were tattered,

Toward the sullen silent fortress turn their belted
breasts again.

All at once, as we are gazing, lo, the roofs of Charlestown
blazing!

They have fired the harmless village; in an hour it will be
down!

The Lord in heaven confound them, rain his fire and
brimstone round them, —

The robbing, murdering red-coats, that would burn a
peaceful town!

GRANDMOTHER'S STORY OF BUNKER HILL

They are marching, stern and solemn! we can see each
massive column
As they near the naked earth-mound with the slanting
walls so steep.
Have our soldiers got faint-hearted, and in noiseless
haste departed?
Are they panic-struck and helpless? Are they palsied or
asleep?

Now! the walls they're almost under! scarce a rod the
foes asunder!
Not a firelock flashed against them! up the earthwork
they will swarm!
But the words have scarce been spoken, when the omi-
nous calm is broken,
And a bellowing crash has emptied all the vengeance of
the storm!

So again, with murderous slaughter, pelted backwards to
the water,
Fly Pigot's running heroes and the frightened braves of
Howe;
And we shout, "At last they're done for, it's their
barges they have run for:
They are beaten, beaten, beaten; and the battle's over
now!"

And we looked, poor timid creatures, on the rough old
soldier's features,
Our lips afraid to question, but he knew what we would
ask:

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

"Not sure," he said; "keep quiet, — once more, I guess,
they'll try it —
Here's damnation to the cut-throats!" — then he
handed me his flask,

Saying, "Gal, you're looking shaky; have a drop of old
Jamaiky;
I'm afeard there 'll be more trouble afore the job is
done;"
So I took one scorching swallow; dreadful faint I felt and
hollow,
Standing there from early morning when the firing was
begun.

All through those hours of trial I had watched a calm
clock dial,
As the hands kept creeping, creeping, — they were
creeping round to four,
When the old man said, "They 're forming with their
bagonets fixed for storming:
It's the death-grip that's a coming, — they will try the
works once more."

With brazen trumpets blaring, the flames behind them
glaring,
The deadly wall before them, in close array they
come;
Still onward, upward toiling, like a dragon's fold uncoil-
ing, —
Like the rattlesnake's shrill warning the reverberating
drum!

GRANDMOTHER'S STORY OF BUNKER HILL

Over heaps all torn and gory — shall I tell the fearful
story,
How they surged above the breastwork, as a sea breaks
over a deck;
How, driven, yet scarce defeated, our worn-out men
retreated,
With their powder-horns all emptied, like the swimmers
from a wreck?

It has all been told and painted; as for me, they say I
fainted,
And the wooden-legged old Corporal stumped with me
down the stair:
When I woke from dreams affrighted the evening lamps
were lighted, —
On the floor a youth was lying; his bleeding breast was
bare.

And I heard through all the flurry, “Send for WARREN!
hurry! hurry!
Tell him here’s a soldier bleeding, and he’ll come and
dress his wound!”
Ah, we knew not till the morrow told its tale of death
and sorrow,
How the starlight found him stiffened on the dark and
bloody ground.

Who the youth was, what his name was, where the place
from which he came was,
Who had brought him from the battle and had left him
at our door,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

He could not speak to tell us; but 't was one of our brave
fellows,

As the homespun plainly showed us which the dying
soldier wore.

For they all thought he was dying, as they gathered
round him crying, —

And they said, "O how they'll miss him!" and, "What
will his mother do?"

Then, his eyelids just unclosing like a child's that has
been dozing,

He faintly murmured, "Mother!" — and — I saw his
eyes were blue.

— "Why, grandma, how you're winking!" — Ah, my
child, it sets me thinking

Of a story not like this one. Well, he somehow lived
along;

So we came to know each other, and I nursed him like a
— mother,

Till at last he stood before me, tall, and rosy-cheeked,
and strong.

And we sometimes walked together in the pleasant
summer weather;

— "Please to tell us what his name was?" — Just your
own, my little dear, —

There's his picture Copley painted: we became so well
acquainted,

That — in short, that's why I'm grandma, and you
children all are here!

THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE SERAPIS AND THE BON HOMME RICHARD

[1775-1781]

BY JOEL TYLER HEADLEY

JONES returned with his prizes to Paris, and offered his services to France. In hopes of getting command of a larger vessel he gave up the Ranger, but soon had cause to regret it, for he was left for a long time without employment. He had been promised the Indian; and the Prince of Nassau, pleased by the daring of Jones, had promised to accompany him as a volunteer. But this fell through, together with many other projects, and but for the firm friendship of Franklin, he would have fared but poorly in the French capital. After a long series of annoyances and disappointments, he at length obtained command of a vessel, which, out of respect to Franklin, he named the Bon Homme Richard, the "Poor Richard." With seven ships in all—a snug little squadron for Jones, had the different commanders been subordinate—he set sail from France, and steered for the coast of Ireland. The want of proper subordination was soon made manifest, for in a week's time the vessels, one after another, parted company, to cruise by themselves, till Jones had with him but the Alliance, Pallas, and Vengeance. In a tremendous storm he bore away, and after several days of gales and heavy seas, approached the shore of Scotland. Taking several prizes near the Firth of Forth, he ascertained that a twenty-four-gun ship, and two cutters were in the roads. These he determined

JOHN PAUL JONES IN THE REVOLUTION

to cut out, and, landing at Leith, lay the town under contribution. The inhabitants supposed his little fleet to be English vessels in pursuit of Paul Jones; and a member of Parliament, a wealthy man in the place, sent off a boat, requesting powder and balls to defend himself, as he said, against the “pirate Paul Jones.” Jones very politely sent back the bearer with a barrel of powder, expressing his regrets that he had no shot to spare. Soon after, in his pompous, inflated manner, he summoned the town to surrender; but the wind blowing steadily off the land, he could not approach with his vessel.

At length, however, the wind changed, and the Richard stood boldly in for the shore. The inhabitants, as they saw her bearing steadily up towards the place, were filled with terror, and ran hither and thither in affright; but the good minister, Rev. Mr. Shirra, assembled his flock on the beach, to pray the Lord to deliver them from their enemies. He was an eccentric man, one of the quaintest of the quaint Scotch divines, so that his prayers, even in those days, were often quoted for their oddity and even roughness.

Whether the following prayer is literally true or not, it is difficult to tell, but there is little doubt that the invocation of the excited, eccentric old man was sufficiently odd. It is said that, having gathered his congregation on the beach in full sight of the vessel, which, under a press of canvas, was making a long tack that brought her close to the town, he knelt down on the sand, and thus began: “Now, dear Lord, dinna ye think it a shame for ye to send this vile pirate to rob our folk o’ Kirkaldy; for ye ken they’re puir enow already, and hae naething to spare. The way the wind blaws he’ll

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

be here in a jiffy, and wha kens what he may do; he's nae too good for onything. Mickle's the mischief he has done already. He'll burn their houses, tak their very claes, and tirl them to the sark. And waes me! wha kens but the bluidy villain might take their lives! The puir weemen are maist frightened out o' their wits, and the bairns skirling after them. I canna think of it! I canna think of it! I hae been long a faithful servant to ye, Lord; but gin ye dinna turn the wind about, and blaw the scoundrel out of our gate, I'll nae stir a foot: but will just sit here till the tide comes. Sae tak ye'r will o't." To the no little astonishment of the good people, a fierce gale at that moment began to blow, which sent one of Jones's prizes ashore, and forced him to stand out to sea. This fixed forever the reputation of good Mr. Shirra; and he did not himself wholly deny that he believed his intercessions brought on the gale, for whenever his parishioners spoke of it to him, he always replied, "I prayed, but the Lord sent the wind."

Stretching from thence along the English coast, Jones cruised about for a while, and at length fell in with the Alliance, which had parted company with him a short time previous. With this vessel, the Pallas and Vengeance,—making, with the Richard, four ships,—he stood to the north; when, on the afternoon of September 23d, 1779, he saw a fleet of forty-one sail hugging the coast. This was the Baltic fleet, under the convoy of the Serapis, of forty-one guns, and the Countess of Scarborough, of twenty guns. Jones immediately issued his orders to form line of battle, while with his ship he gave chase. The convoy scattered like wild pigeons, and ran for the shore, to place themselves under the protec-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

tion of a fort, but the two warships advanced to the conflict.

It was a beautiful day, the wind was light, so that not a wave broke the smooth surface of the sea — and all was smiling and tranquil on land, as the hostile forces slowly approached each other. The piers of Scarborough were crowded with spectators, and the old promontory of Flamborough, over three miles distant, was black with the multitude assembled to witness the engagement. The breeze was so light that the vessels approached each other slowly, as if reluctant to come to the mortal struggle, and mar that placid scene and that beautiful evening with the sound of battle. It was a thrilling spectacle, those bold ships with their sails all set, moving sternly up to each other. At length the cloudless sun sank behind the hills, and twilight deepened over the waters. The next moment the full round moon pushed its broad disk over the tranquil waters, bathing in her soft beams the white sails that now seemed like gentle moving clouds on the deep.

The Pallas stood for the Countess of Scarborough, while the Alliance, after having also come within range, withdrew and took up a position where she could safely contemplate the fight. Paul Jones, now in his element, paced the deck to and fro, impatient for the contest; and at length approached within pistol-shot of the Serapis. The latter was a new ship, with an excellent crew, and throwing, with every broadside, seventy-five pounds more than the Richard. Jones, however, rated this lightly, and with his old, half-worn-out merchantman, closed fearlessly with his powerful antagonist. As he approached the latter, Captain Pearson hailed

THE FIGHT OF THE BON HOMME RICHARD

him with "What ship is that?" "I can't hear what you say," was the reply. "What ship is that?" rang back. "Answer immediately, or I shall fire into you." A shot from the Richard was the significant answer, and immediately both vessels opened their broadsides. Two of the three old eighteen-pounders of the Richard burst at the first fire, and Jones was compelled to close the lower deck ports, which were not opened again during the action. This was an ominous beginning, for it reduced the force of the Richard to one third below that of the Serapis. The broadsides now became more rapid, presenting a strange spectacle to the people on shore, the flashes of the guns amid the cloud of smoke, followed by the roar that shook the coast, the dim moonlight, serving to but half-reveal the struggling vessels, conspired to render it one of terror and of dread. The two vessels kept moving alongside, constantly crossing each other's track; now passing each other's bow, and now the stern; pouring in such terrific broadsides as made both friend and foe stagger. Thus fighting and maneuvering, they swept onward, until at length the Richard got foul of the Serapis, and Jones gave the orders to board. His men were repulsed, and Captain Pearson hailed him to know if he had struck. "I have not yet begun to fight," was the short and stern reply of Jones; and backing his topsails, while the Serapis kept full, the vessels parted, and again came alongside, and broadside answered broadside with fearful effect. But Jones soon saw that this mode of fighting would not answer. The superiority in weight of metal gave them great advantage in this heavy cannonading; especially as his vessel was old and rotten, while every timber in that of his antagonist was new

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

and stanch; and so he determined to throw himself aboard of the enemy. In doing this, he fell farther than he intended, and his vessel catching a moment by the jib boom of the Serapis, carried it away, and the two ships swung close alongside of each other, head and stern, the muzzles of the guns touching. Jones immediately ordered them to be lashed together; and in his eagerness to secure them, helped with his own hands to tie the lashings. Captain Pearson did not like this close fighting, for it destroyed all the advantage his superior sailing and heavier guns gave him, and so let drop an anchor to swing his ship apart. But the two vessels were firmly clenched in the embrace of death; for, added to all the lashings, a spare anchor of the Serapis had hooked the quarter of the Richard, so that when the former obeyed her cable, and swung round to the tide, the latter swung also. Finding that he could not unlock the desperate embrace in which his foe had clasped him, the Englishman again opened his broadsides. The action then became terrific; the guns touched muzzles, and the gunners, in ramming home their cartridges, were compelled frequently to thrust their ramrods into the enemy's ports. Never before had an English commander met such a foeman nor fought such a battle. The timbers rent at every explosion; and huge gaps opened in the sides of each vessel, while they trembled at each discharge as if in the mouth of a volcano. With his heaviest guns burst, and part of his deck blown up, Jones still kept up this unequal fight, with a bravery unparalleled in naval warfare. He, with his own hands, helped to work the guns; and blackened with powder and smoke, moved about among his men with the stern expression

THE FIGHT OF THE BON HOMME RICHARD

never to yield, written on his delicate features in lines not to be mistaken. To compensate for the superiority of the enemy's guns, he had to discharge his own with greater rapidity, so that after a short time they became so hot that they bounded like mad creatures in their fastenings; and at every discharge the gallant ship trembled like a smitten ox, from kelson to crosstrees, and heeled over till her yardarms almost swept the water. In the mean time his topmen did terrible execution. Hanging amid the rigging, they dropped hand grenades on the enemy's decks with fatal precision. One daring fellow walked out on the end of the yard with a bucket full of these missiles in his hand, and hurling them below, finally set fire to a heap of cartridges. The blaze and explosion which followed were terrific — arms and legs went heavenward together, and nearly sixty men were killed or wounded by this sudden blow. They succeeded at length in driving most of the enemy below decks. The battle then presented a singular aspect — Jones made the upper deck of the Serapis too hot for her crew, while the latter tore his lower decks so dreadfully with her broadsides that his men could not remain there a moment. Thus they fought, one above and the other beneath, the blood in the mean time flowing in rills over the decks of both. Ten times was the Serapis on fire, and as often were the flames extinguished. Never did a man struggle braver than the English commander, but a still braver heart opposed him. At this juncture the Alliance came up, and instead of pouring her broadsides into the Serapis, hurled them against the Poor Richard! — now poor, indeed! Jones was in a transport of rage, but he could not help himself.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES.

In this awful crisis, fighting by the light of the guns, for the smoke had shut out that of the moon, the gunner and carpenter both rushed up, declaring the ship was sinking. The shot-holes which had pierced the hull of the Richard between wind and water had already sunk below the surface, and the water was pouring in like a torrent. The carpenter ran to pull down the colors, which were still flying amid the smoke of battle, while the gunner cried, "Quarter, for God's sake, quarter!" Still keeping up this cry, Jones hurled a pistol, which he had just fired at the enemy, at his head, which fractured his skull, and sent him headlong down the hatchway. Captain Pearson hailed to know if he had struck, and was answered by Jones with a "No," accompanied by an oath, that told that, if he could do no better, he would go down, with his colors flying. The master-at-arms, hearing the gunner's cry, and thinking the ship was going to the bottom, released a hundred English prisoners into the midst of the confusion. One of these, passing through the fire to his own ship, told Captain Pearson that the Richard was sinking, and if he would hold out a few moments longer, she must go down. Imagine the condition of Jones at this moment — with every battery silenced, except the one at which he still stood unshaken, his ship gradually settling beneath him, a hundred prisoners swarming his deck, and his own consort raking him with her broadsides, his last hope seemed about to expire. Still he would not yield. His officers urged him to surrender, while cries of quarter arose on every side. Undismayed and resolute to the last, he ordered the prisoners to the pumps, declaring if they refused to work he would take them to the bottom with him. Thus

THE FIGHT OF THE BON HOMME RICHARD

making panic fight panic, he continued the conflict. The spectacle at this moment was awful — both vessels looked like wrecks, and both were on fire. The flames shot heavenward around the mast of the Serapis, and at length, at half-past ten, she struck. For a time, the inferior officers did not know which had yielded, such a perfect tumult had the fight become. For three hours and a half had this incessant cannonade, within yard-arm and yardarm of each other, continued, piling three hundred dead and wounded men on those shattered decks. Nothing but the courage and stern resolution of Jones never to surrender saved him from defeat.

When the morning dawned, the Bon Homme Richard presented a most deplorable appearance — she lay a complete wreck on the sea, riddled through, and literally stove to pieces. There were six feet of water in the hold, while above she was on fire in two places. Jones had put forth every effort to save the vessel in which he had won such renown, but in vain. He kept her afloat all the following day and night, but next morning she was found to be going. The waves rolled through her — she swayed from side to side, like a dying man — then gave a lurch forward, and went down head foremost. Jones stood on the deck of the English ship, and watched her as he would a dying friend, and finally, with a swelling heart, saw her last mast disappear, and the eddying waves close, with a rushing sound, over her as she sank with the dead, who had so nobly fallen on her decks. They could have wished no better coffin or burial.

IN THE REVOLT OF THE VENDÉE

[1793]

BY VICTOR HUGO

[THE peasants of the Vendée, a department of western France, were devoted to the local nobles and had no sympathy with the French Revolution. They rose against the Republican Government in 1789; and in 1793, indignant at the conscription laws, and hoping for the aid of England, they made angry resistance. This lasted for three years before they were subdued.

The Editor.]

As we have just seen, the peasants, on arriving at Dol, dispersed themselves through the town, each man following his own fancy, as happens when troops "obey from friendship," a favorite expression with the Vendéans,—a species of obedience which makes heroes but not troopers. They thrust the artillery out of the way along with the baggage, under the arches of the old market-hall. They were weary; they ate, drank, counted their rosaries, and lay down pell-mell across the principal street, which was encumbered rather than guarded.

As night came on, the greater portion fell asleep, with their heads on their knapsacks, some having their wives beside them, for the peasant women often followed their husbands, and the robust ones acted as spies. It was a mild July evening; the constellation glittered in the deep purple of the sky. The entire bivouac, which resembled rather the halt of a caravan than an army encamped, gave itself up to repose. Suddenly, amid the dull

IN THE REVOLT OF THE VENDÉE

gleams of twilight, such as had not yet closed their eyes saw three pieces of ordnance pointed at the entrance of the street. It was Gauvain's artillery. He had surprised the main-guard. He was in the town, and his column held the top of the street.

A peasant started up, crying, "Who goes there?" and fired his musket; a cannon-shot replied. Then a furious discharge of musketry burst forth. The whole drowsy crowd sprang up with a start. A rude shock,—to fall asleep under the stars and wake under a volley of grape-shot.

The first moments were terrific. There is nothing so tragic as the aimless swarming of a thunderstricken crowd. They flung themselves on their arms; they yelled, they ran; many fell. The assaulted peasants no longer knew what they were about, and blindly shot one another. The townspeople, stunned with fright, rushed in and out of their houses, and wandered frantically amid the hubbub. Families shrieked to one another. A dismal combat ensued, in which women and children were mingled. The balls, as they whistled overhead, streaked the darkness with rays of light. A fusillade poured from every dark corner. There was nothing but smoke and tumult. The entanglement of the baggage-wagons and the cannon-carriages was added to the confusion. The horses became unmanageable; the wounded were trampled under foot. The groans of the poor wretches, helpless on the ground, filled the air. Horror here, stupefaction there. Soldiers and officers sought for one another. In the midst of all this could be seen creatures made indifferent to the awful scene by personal preoccupations. A woman sat nursing her new-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

born babe, seated on a bit of wall, against which her husband leaned with his leg broken; and he, while his blood was flowing, tranquilly loaded his rifle and fired at random, straight before him into the darkness. Men lying flat on the ground fired across the spokes of the wagon-wheels. At moments there rose a hideous din of clamors, then the great voices of the cannon drowned all. It was awful. It was like a felling of trees; they dropped one upon another. Gauvain poured out a deadly fire from his ambush, and suffered little loss.

Still the peasants, courageous amid their disorder, ended by putting themselves on the defensive; they retreated into the market,—a vast, obscure redoubt, a forest of stone pillars. There they again made a stand; anything which resembled a wood gave them confidence. Imârus supplied the absence of Lantenac as best he could. They had cannon, but to the great astonishment of Gauvain they did not make use of it; that was owing to the fact that the artillery officers had gone with the marquis to reconnoiter Mount Dol, and the peasants did not know how to manage the culverins and demi-culverins. But they riddled with balls the Blues who cannonaded them; they replied to the grape-shot by volleys of musketry. It was now they who were sheltered. They had heaped together the drays, the tumbrrels, the casks, all the litter of the old market, and improvised a lofty barricade, with openings through which they could pass their carbines. From these holes their fusillade was murderous. The whole was quickly arranged. In a quarter of an hour the market presented an impregnable front.

This became a serious matter for Gauvain. This

IN THE REVOLT OF THE VENDÉE

market suddenly transformed into a citadel was unexpected. The peasants were inside it, massed and solid. Gauvain's surprise had succeeded, but he ran the risk of defeat. He got down from his saddle. He stood attentively studying the darkness, his arms folded, clutching his sword in one hand, erect, in the glare of a torch which lighted his battery. The gleam, falling on his tall figure, made him visible to the men behind the barricade. He became an aim for them, but he did not notice it. The shower of balls sent out from the barricade fell about him as he stood there, lost in thought. But he could oppose cannon to all these carbines, and cannon always ends by getting the advantage. Victory rests with him who has the artillery. His battery, well-manned, insured him the superiority.

Suddenly a lightning-flash burst from the shadowy market; there was a sound like a peal of thunder, and a ball broke through a house above Gauvain's head. The barricade was replying to the cannon with its own voice. What had happened? Something new had occurred. The artillery was no longer confined to one side. A second ball followed the first and buried itself in the wall close to Gauvain. A third knocked his hat off on the ground. These balls were of a heavy caliber. It was a sixteen-pounder that fired.

"They are aiming at you, Commandant," cried the artillerymen.

They extinguished the torch. Gauvain, as if in a reverie, picked up his hat. Some one had in fact aimed at Gauvain: it was Lantenac. The marquis had just arrived within the barricade from the opposite side. Imanus had hurried to meet him.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

"Monseigneur, we are surprised!"

"By whom?"

"I do not know."

"Is the route to Dinan free?"

"I think so."

"We must begin a retreat."

"It has commenced. A good many have run away."

"We must not run; we must fall back. Why are you not making use of this artillery?"

"The men lost their heads; besides, the officers were not here."

"I am come."

"Monseigneur, I have sent toward Fougères all I could of the baggage, the women, everything useless. What is to be done with the three little prisoners?"

"Ah, those children!"

"Yes."

"They are our hostages. Have them taken to La Tourgue."

This said, the marquis rushed to the barricade. With the arrival of the chief the whole face of affairs changed. The barricade was ill-constructed for artillery; there was only room for two cannon; the marquis put in position a couple of sixteen-pounders, for which loopholes were made. As he leaned over one of the guns, watching the enemy's battery through the opening, he perceived Gauvain.

"It is he!" cried the marquis.

Then he took the swab and rammer himself, loaded the piece, sighted it, and fired. Thrice he aimed at Gauvain and missed. The third time he only succeeded in knocking his hat off.

IN THE REVOLT OF THE VENDÉE

"Numbskull!" muttered Lantenac; "a little lower, and I should have taken his head." Suddenly the torch went out, and he had only darkness before him. "So be it!" said he. Then turning toward the peasant gunners, he cried: "Now let them have it!"

Gauvain, on his side, was not less in earnest. The seriousness of the situation increased. A new phase of the combat developed itself. The barricade had begun to use cannon. Who could tell if it were not about to pass from the defensive to the offensive? He had before him, after deducting the killed and fugitives, at least five thousand combatants, and he had left only twelve hundred serviceable men. What would happen to the republicans if the enemy perceived their paucity of numbers? The rôles were reversed. He had been the assailant, — he would become the assailed. If the barricade were to make a sortie, everything might be lost. What was to be done? He could no longer think of attacking the barricade in front; an attempt at main force would be foolhardy: twelve hundred men cannot dislodge five thousand. To rush upon them was impossible; to wait would be fatal. He must make an end. But how?

Gauvain belonged to the neighborhood; he was acquainted with the town; he knew that the old market-house where the Vendéans were intrenched was backed by a labyrinth of narrow and crooked streets. He turned toward his lieutenant, who was that valiant Captain Guéchamp, afterward famous for clearing out the forest of Concise, where Jean Chouan was born, and for preventing the capture of Bourgneuf by holding the dike of La Chaîne against the rebels.

"Guéchamp," said he, "I leave you in command.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Fire as fast as you can. Riddle the barricade with cannon-balls. Keep all those fellows over yonder busy."

"I understand," said Guéchamp.

"Mass the whole column with their guns loaded, and hold them ready to make an onslaught." He added a few words in Guéchamp's ear.

"I hear," said Guéchamp.

Gauvain resumed, "Are all our drummers on foot?"

"Yes."

"We have nine. Keep two, and give me seven."

The seven drummers ranged themselves in silence in front of Gauvain. Then he said: "Battalion of the Bonnet Rouge!"

Twelve men, of whom one was a sergeant, stepped out from the main body of the troop.

"I demand the whole battalion," said Gauvain.

"Here it is," replied the sergeant.

"You are twelve!"

"There are twelve of us left."

"It is well," said Gauvain.

There was a forage wagon standing near; Gauvain pointed toward it with his finger. "Sergeant, order your men to make some straw ropes and twist them about their guns, so that there will be no noise if they knock together."

A minute passed; the order was silently executed in the darkness.

"It is done," said the sergeant.

"Soldiers, take off your shoes," commanded Gauvain.

"We have none," returned the sergeant.

They numbered, counting the drummers, nineteen men; Gauvain made the twentieth. He cried: "Follow

IN THE REVOLT OF THE VENDÉE

me! Single file! The drummers next to me, the battalion behind them. Sergeant, you will command the battalion."

He put himself at the head of the column, and while the firing on both sides continued, these twenty men, gliding along like shadows, plunged into the deserted lanes. The line marched thus for some time, twisting along the fronts of the houses. The whole town seemed dead; the citizens were hidden in their cellars. Every door was barred; every shutter closed; no light to be seen anywhere. Amid the silence this principal street kept up its din; the cannonading continued; the republican battery and the royalist barricade spit forth their volleys with undiminished fury.

After twenty minutes of this tortuous march, Gauvain, who kept his way unerringly through the darkness, reached the end of a lane which led into the broad street, but on the other side of the market-house. The position was turned. In this direction there was no intrenchment, according to the eternal imprudence of barricade builders; the market was open, and the entrance free among the pillars where some baggage-wagons stood ready to depart. Gauvain and his nineteen men had the five thousand Vendéans before them, but their backs instead of their faces.

Gauvain spoke in a low voice to the sergeant; the soldiers untwisted the straw from their guns; the twelve grenadiers posted themselves in line behind the angle of the lane, and the seven drummers waited with their drumsticks lifted. The artillery firing was intermittent. Suddenly, in a pause between the discharges, Gauvain waved his sword, and cried in a voice which rang like a

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

trumpet through the silence: "Two hundred men to the right; two hundred men to the left; all the rest in the center!"

The twelve muskets fired, and the seven drums beat.

Gauvain uttered the formidable battle-cry of the Blues: "To your bayonets! Down upon them!"

The effect was prodigious. This whole peasant mass felt itself surprised in the rear, and believed that it had a fresh army at its back. At the same instant, on hearing the drums, the column which Guéchamp commanded at the head of the street began to move, sounding the charge in its turn, and flung itself at a run on the barricade. The peasants found themselves between two fires. Panic magnifies: a pistol-shot sounds like the report of a cannon; in moments of terror the imagination heightens every noise; the barking of a dog sounds like the roar of a lion. Add to this the fact that the peasant catches fright as easily as thatch catches fire; and as quickly as a blazing thatch becomes a conflagration, a panic among peasants becomes a rout. An indescribably confused flight ensued.

In a few instants the market-hall was empty; the terrified rustics broke away in all directions; the officers were powerless; Imanus uselessly killed two or three fugitives; nothing was to be heard but the cry, "Save yourselves!" The army poured through the streets of the town like water through the holes of a sieve, and dispersed into the open country with the rapidity of a cloud carried along by a whirlwind. Some fled toward Châteauneuf, some toward Plerguer, others toward Antrain.

IN THE REVOLT OF THE VENDÉE

The Marquis de Lantenac watched this stampede. He spiked the guns with his own hands and then retreated,—the last of all, slowly, composedly, saying to himself, “Decidedly, the peasants will not stand. We must have the English.”

THE BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS

[1798]

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT

EARLY on the morning of the 6th of July, the army commenced its march over the apparently boundless plain of shifting sands. No living creature met the eye but a few Arab horsemen, who occasionally appeared and disappeared at the horizon, and who, concealing themselves behind the sand-hills, immediately murdered any stragglers who wandered from the ranks, or from sickness or exhaustion loitered behind. Four days of inconceivable suffering were occupied in crossing the desert. The soldiers, accustomed to the luxuriance, beauty, and abundance of the valleys of Italy, were plunged into the most abject depression. Even the officers found their firmness giving way, and Lannes and Murat, in paroxysms of despair, dashed their hats upon the sand, and trampled them under foot. Many fell and perished on the long and dreary route. But the dense columns toiled on, hour after hour, weary, hungry, and faint, and thirsty, the hot sun blazing down upon their unsheltered heads, and the yielding sands burning their blistered feet. At the commencement of the enterprise, Napoleon had promised to each of his soldiers seven acres of land. As they looked around upon this dreary and boundless ocean of sand, they spoke jocularly of his moderation in promising them but *seven acres*. "The young rogue," said they, "might have safely offered us as much as we

THE BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS

chose to take. We certainly should not have abused his good-nature."

Nothing can show more strikingly the singular control which Napoleon had obtained over his army than the fact that, under these circumstances, no one murmured against him. He toiled along on foot at the head of the column, sharing the fatigue of the most humble soldiers. Like them, he threw himself upon the sands at night, with the sand for his pillow, and, secreting no luxuries for himself, he ate the coarse beans which afforded the only food for the army. He was ever the last to fold his cloak around him for the night, and the first to spring from the ground in the morning. The soldiers bitterly cursed the Government who had sent them to that land of barrenness and desolation. Seeing the men of science stopping to examine the antiquities, they accused them of being the authors of the expedition, and revenged themselves with witticisms. But no one uttered a word against Napoleon. His presence overawed all. He seemed to be insensible to hunger, thirst, or fatigue. It was observed that, while all others were drenched with perspiration, not a drop of moisture oozed from his brow.

Through all the hours of this dreary march, not a word or gesture escaped him which indicated the slightest embarrassment or inquietude. One day he approached a group of discontented officers, and said to them, in tones of firmness which at once brought them to their senses, "You are holding mutinous language! Beware! It is not your being six feet high which will save you from being shot in a couple of hours."

In the midst of the desert, when gloom and despondency had taken possession of all hearts, unbounded joy

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

was excited by the appearance of a lake of crystal water but a few miles before them, with villages and palm trees beautifully reflected in its clear and glassy depths. The parched and panting troops rushed eagerly on to plunge into the delicious waves. Hour after hour passed, and they approached no nearer the elysium before them. Dreadful was their disappointment when they found that it was all an illusion, and that they were pursuing the mirage of the dry and dusty desert. At one time Napoleon, with one or two of his officers, wandered a little distance from the main body of his army. A troop of Arab horsemen, concealed by some sand-hills, watched his movements, but for some unknown reason, when he was entirely in their power, did not harm him. Napoleon soon perceived his peril, and escaped unmolested. Upon his return to the troops, peacefully smiling, he said, "It is not written on high that I am to perish by the hands of the Arabs."

As the army drew near the Nile, the Mameluke horsemen increased in numbers, and in the frequency and the recklessness of their attacks. Their appearance and the impetuosity of their onset was most imposing. Each one was mounted on a fleet Arabian steed, and was armed with pistol, saber, carbine, and blunderbuss. The carbine was a short gun, which threw a small bullet with great precision. The blunderbuss was also a short gun, with a large bore, capable of holding a number of balls, and of doing execution without exact aim. These fierce warriors, accustomed to the saddle almost from infancy, presented an array indescribably brilliant, as, with gay turbans, and waving plumes, and gaudy banners, and gold-spangled robes, in meteoric splendor, with the

BONAPARTE BEFORE THE SPHINX



THE BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS

swiftness of the wind, they burst from behind the sand-hills. Charging like the rush of the tornado, they rent the air with their hideous yells, and discharged their carbines while in full career, and halted, wheeled, and retreated with a precision and celerity which amazed even the most accomplished horsemen of the Army of Italy.

The extended sandy plains were exactly adapted to the maneuvers of these flying herds. The least motion or the slightest breath of wind raised a cloud of dust, blinding, choking, and smothering the French, but apparently presenting no annoyance either to the Arab rider or to his horse. If a weary straggler loitered a few steps behind the toiling column, or if any soldiers ventured to leave the ranks in pursuit of the Mamelukes in their bold attacks, certain and instant death was encountered. A wild troop, enveloped in clouds of dust, like spirits from another world, dashed upon them, cut down the adventurers with their keen Damascus blades, and disappeared in the desert almost before a musket could be leveled at them.

After five days of inconceivable suffering, the long-wished-for Nile was seen, glittering through the sand-hills of the desert, and bordered by a fringe of the richest luxuriance. The scene burst upon the view of the panting soldiers like a vision of enchantment. Shouts of joy burst from the ranks. All discipline and order were instantly forgotten. The whole army of thirty thousand men, with horses and camels, rushed forward, a tumultuous throng, and plunged, in the delirium of excitement, into the waves. They luxuriated, with indescribable delight, in the cool and refreshing stream. They rolled

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

over and over in the water, shouting and frolicking in wild joy. Reckless of consequences, they drank and drank again, as if they never could be satiated with the delicious beverage.

In the midst of this scene of turbulent and almost frenzied exultation, a cloud of dust was seen in the distance, the trampling of hoofs was heard, and a body of nearly a thousand Mameluke horsemen, on fleet Arabian chargers, came sweeping down upon them with fiendlike velocity, their sabers flashing in the sunlight, and rending the air with their hideous yells. The drums beat the alarm, the trumpets sounded, and the veteran soldiers, drilled to the most perfect mechanical precision, instantly formed in squares, with the artillery at the angles, to meet the foe. In a moment, the assault, like a tornado, fell upon them. But it was a tornado striking a rock. Not a line wavered. A palisade of bristling bayonets met the breasts of the horses, and they recoiled from the shock. A volcanic burst of fire, from artillery and musketry, rolled hundreds of steeds and riders together in the dust. The survivors, wheeling their unchecked chargers, disappeared with the same meteoric rapidity with which they had approached.

The flotilla now appeared in sight, having arrived at the destined spot at the precise hour designated by Napoleon. This was not accident. It was the result of that wonderful power of mind and extent of information which had enabled Napoleon perfectly to understand the difficulties of the two routes, and to give his orders in such a way that they could be and would be obeyed. It was remarked by Napoleon's generals that, during a week's residence in Egypt, he acquired apparently as

THE BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS

perfect an acquaintance with the country as if it had been his native land.

The whole moral aspect of the army was now changed with the change in the aspect of the country. The versatile troops forgot their sufferings, and, rejoicing in abundance, danced and sang beneath the refreshing shade of sycamores and palm trees. The fields were waving with luxuriant harvests. Pigeons were abundant. The most delicious watermelons were brought to the camp in inexhaustible profusion; but the villages were poor and squalid, and the houses were hovels of mud. The execrations in which the soldiers had indulged in the desert now gave place to jokes and glee. For seven days they marched resolutely forward along the banks of the Nile, admiring the fertility of the country, and despising the poverty and degradation of the inhabitants. They declared that there was no such place as Cairo, but that the "Little Corporal" had suffered himself to be transported, *like a good boy*, to that miserable land, in search of a city even more unsubstantial than the mirage of the desert.

On the march, Napoleon stopped at the house of an Arab sheik. The interior presented a revolting scene of squalidness and misery. The proprietor was, however, reported to be rich. Napoleon treated the old man with great kindness, and asked, through an interpreter, why he lived in such utter destitution of all the comforts of life, assuring him that an unreserved answer should expose him to no inconvenience. He replied: "Some years ago I repaired and furnished my dwelling. Information of this was carried to Cairo, and having been thus proved to be wealthy, a large sum of money was

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

demanded from me by the Mamelukes, and the bastinado was inflicted until I paid it. Look at my feet, which bear witness to what I endured. From that time I have reduced myself to the barest necessities, and no longer seek to repair anything." The poor old man was lamed for life, in consequence of the mutilation which his feet received from the terrible infliction. Such was the tyranny of the Mamelukes. The Egyptians, in abject slavery to their proud oppressors, were compelled to surrender their wives, their children, and even their own persons, to the absolute will of the despots who ruled them.

Numerous bands of Mameluke horsemen, the most formidable body of cavalry in the world, were continually hovering about the army, watching for points of exposure, and it was necessary to be constantly prepared for an attack. Nothing could have been more effective than the disposition which Napoleon made of his troops to meet this novel mode of warfare. He formed his army into five squares. The sides of each were composed of ranks six men deep. The artillery were placed at the angles. Within the squares were grenadier companies in platoons to support the points of attack. The generals, the scientific corps, and the baggage were in the center. These squares were moving masses. When on the march, all faced in one direction, the two sides marching in flank. When charged, they immediately halted and fronted on every side — the outermost rank kneeling that those behind might shoot over their heads; the whole body thus presenting a living fortress of bristling bayonets.

When they were to carry a position, the three front

THE BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS

ranks were to detach themselves from the square, and to form a column of attack. The other three ranks were to remain in the rear, still forming the square, ready to rally the column. These flaming citadels of fire set at defiance all the power of the Arab horsemen. The attacks of the enemy soon became a subject of merriment to the soldiers. The scientific men, or *savans*, as they were called, had been supplied with asses to transport their persons and philosophical apparatus. As soon as the body of Mamelukes was seen in the distance, the order was given, with military precision, "*Form square, savans and asses in the center.*" This order was echoed from rank to rank with peals of laughter. The soldiers amused themselves with calling the asses *demi-savans*. Though the soldiers thus enjoyed their jokes, they cherished the highest respect for many of these *savans*, who in scenes of battle had manifested the utmost intrepidity. After a march of seven days, during which time they had many bloody skirmishes with the enemy, the army approached Cairo.

Mourad Bey had there assembled the greater part of his Mamelukes, nearly ten thousand in number, for a decisive battle. These proud and powerful horsemen were supported by twenty-four thousand foot-soldiers, strongly intrenched. Cairo is on the eastern bank of the Nile. Napoleon was marching along the western shore. On the morning of the 21st of July, Napoleon, conscious that he was near the city, set his army in motion before the break of day. Just as the sun was rising in those cloudless skies, the soldiers beheld the lofty minarets of the city upon their left gilded by its rays, and upon the right, upon the borders of the desert, the gigantic

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

pyramids rising like mountains upon an apparently boundless plain.

The whole army instinctively halted, and gazed, awestricken, upon those monuments of antiquity. The face of Napoleon beamed with enthusiasm. "Soldiers!" he exclaimed, as he rode along the ranks, "from those summits forty centuries contemplate your actions." The ardor of the soldiers was aroused to the highest pitch. Animated by the clangor of martial bands and the gleam of flaunting banners, they advanced with impetuous steps to meet their foes. The whole plain before them, at the base of the pyramids, was filled with armed men. The glittering weapons of ten thousand horsemen, in the utmost splendor of barbaric chivalry, brilliant with plumes and arms of burnished steel and gold, presented an array inconceivably imposing. Undismayed, the French troops, marshaled in five invincible squares, pressed on. There was no other alternative. Napoleon must march upon those intrenchments, behind which twenty-four thousand men were stationed with powerful artillery and musketry to sweep his ranks, and a formidable body of ten thousand horsemen, on fleet and powerful Arabian steeds, awaiting the onset, and ready to seize upon the slightest indication of confusion to plunge, with the fury which fatalism can inspire, upon his bleeding and mangled squares.

It must have been with Napoleon a moment of intense anxiety. But as he sat upon his horse, in the center of one of the squares, and carefully examined with his telescope the disposition of the enemy, no one could discern the least trace of uneasiness. His gaze

THE BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS

was long and intense. The keenness of his scrutiny detected that the enemy's guns were not mounted upon carriages, and that they could not, therefore, be turned from the direction in which they were placed. No other officer, though many of them had equally good glasses, made this important discovery. He immediately, by a lateral movement, guided his army to the right, toward the pyramids, that his squares might be out of the range of the guns, and that he might attack the enemy in flank. The moment Mourad Bey perceived this evolution, he divined its object, and, with great military sagacity, resolved instantly to charge.

"You shall see us," said the proud Bey, "cut up those dogs like gourds!"

It was, indeed, a fearful spectacle. Ten thousand horsemen, magnificently dressed, with the fleetest steeds in the world, urging their horses with bloody spurs to the most impetuous and furious onset, rending the heavens with their cries, and causing the very earth to tremble beneath the thunder of iron feet, came down upon the adamantine host. Nothing was ever seen in war more furious than this charge. Ten thousand horsemen form an enormous mass. Those longest inured to danger felt that it was an awful moment. It seemed impossible to resist such a living avalanche. The most profound silence reigned through the ranks, interrupted only by the word of command. The nerves of excitement being roused to the utmost tension, every order was executed with most marvelous rapidity and precision. The soldiers held their breath, and with bristling bayonets stood shoulder to shoulder to receive the shock.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

The moment the Mamelukes arrived within gunshot, the artillery at the angles ploughed their ranks, and platoons of musketry, volley after volley, in uninterrupted discharge, swept into their faces a pitiless tempest of destruction. Horses and riders, struck by the balls, rolled over each other by hundreds on the sand. They were trampled and crushed by the iron hoofs of the thousands of frantic steeds, enveloped in dust and smoke, composing the vast and impetuous squadrons. But the squares stood as firm as the pyramids at whose base they fought. Not one was broken; and not one wavered. The daring Mamelukes, in the frenzy of their rage and disappointment, threw away their lives with the utmost recklessness. They wheeled their horses round, and reined them back upon the ranks, that they might kick their way into those terrible fortresses of living men. Rendered furious by their inability to break the ranks, they hurled their pistols and carbines at the heads of the French. The wounded crawled along the ground, and with their scimitars cut at the legs of their indomitable foes. They displayed superhuman bravery, the only virtue which the Mamelukes possessed.

But an incessant and merciless fire from Napoleon's well-trained battalions continually thinned their ranks, and at last the Mamelukes, in the wildest disorder, broke and fled. The infantry in the intrenched camp, witnessing the utter discomfiture of the mounted troops, whom they had considered invincible, and seeing such incessant and volcanic sheets of flame bursting from the impenetrable squares, caught the panic, and joined the flight. Napoleon now, in his turn, charged with the utmost impetuosity. A scene of indescribable confusion

THE BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS

and horror ensued. The extended plain was crowded with fugitives — footmen and horsemen, bewildered with terror, seeking escape from their terrible foes. Thousands plunged into the river, and endeavored to escape by swimming to the opposite shore. But a shower of bullets, like hailstones, fell upon them, and the waves of the Nile were crimsoned with their blood. Others sought the desert, a wild and rabble rout.

The victors, with their accustomed celerity, pursued, pitilessly pouring into the dense masses of their flying foes the most terrible discharges of artillery and musketry. The rout was complete, the carnage awful. The sun had hardly reached the meridian before the whole embattled host had disappeared, and the plain, as far as the eye could extend, was strewn with the dying and the dead. The camp, with all its Oriental wealth, fell into the hands of the victors, and the soldiers enriched themselves with its profusion of splendid shawls, magnificent weapons, Arabian horses, and purses filled with gold. The Mamelukes were accustomed to lavish great wealth in the decoration of their persons, and to carry with them large sums of money. The gold and the trappings found upon the body of each Mameluke were worth from twelve hundred to two thousand dollars. Besides those who were slain upon the field, more than a thousand of these formidable horsemen were drowned in the Nile. For many days the soldiers employed themselves in fishing up the rich booty, and the French camp was filled with all abundance. This most sanguinary battle cost the French scarcely one hundred men in killed and wounded. More than ten thousand of the enemy perished. Napoleon gazed with

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

admiration upon the bravery which these proud horsemen displayed. "Could I have united the Mameluke horse to the French infantry," said he, "I should have reckoned myself master of the world."

After the battle, Napoleon, now the undisputed conqueror of Egypt, quartered himself for the night in the country palace of Mourad Bey. The apartments of this voluptuous abode were embellished with all the appurtenances of Oriental luxury. The officers were struck with surprise in viewing the multitude of cushions and divans covered with the finest damasks and silks, and ornamented with golden fringe. Egypt was beggared to minister to the sensual indulgence of these haughty despots. Much of the night was passed in exploring this singular mansion. The garden was extensive and exceedingly magnificent. Innumerable vines were laden with the richest grapes. The vintage was soon gathered by the thousands of soldiers who filled the alleys and loitered in the arbors. Pots of preserves, of confectionery, and of sweetmeats of every kind, were quickly devoured by an army of mouths. The thousands of little elegancies which Europe, Asia, and Africa had contributed to minister to the voluptuous splendors of the regal mansion were speedily transferred to the knapsacks of the soldiers.

The "Battle of the Pyramids," as Napoleon characteristically designated it, sent a thrill of terror far and wide into the interior of Asia and Africa. These proud, merciless, licentious oppressors were execrated by the timid Egyptians, but they were deemed invincible. In an hour they had vanished like the mist before the genius of Napoleon.

THE BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS

The caravans which came to Cairo circulated through the vast regions of the interior, with all the embellishments of Oriental exaggeration, glowing accounts of the destruction of those terrible squadrons which had so long tyrannized over Egypt, and the fame of whose military prowess had caused the most distant tribes to tremble. The name of Napoleon became suddenly as renowned in Asia and Africa as it had previously become in Europe. But twenty-one days had elapsed since he placed his foot upon the sands at Alexandria, and now he was sovereign of Egypt.

HOHENLINDEN

[1800]

BY THOMAS CAMPBELL

[AFTER the execution of King Louis XVI of France, coalitions were formed by other nations of Europe in the determination to restore the monarchy and repress the plans of Napoleon. During what was known as the Second Coalition, the Austrians were defeated at Marengo by Napoleon, then at Hohenlinden by Moreau. This brought about a treaty of peace with Austria and Germany in 1801.

The Editor.]

ON Linden when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight
When the drum beat, at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed,
Each horseman drew his battle blade,
And furious each charger neighed,
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
Then rushed the steed to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of heaven
Far flashed the red artillery.

HOHENLINDEN

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stainèd snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

"T is morn, but scarce yon lurid sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich, all thy banners wave!
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Ah! few shall part where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulcher.

TRAFAVGAR

[1805]

BY WILLIAM C. BENNETT

NORTHWEST the wind was blowing
Our good ships running free;
Seven leagues lay Cape Trafalgar
Away upon our lee;
'T was then, as broke the morning,
The Frenchman we desried,
East away, there they lay,
That day that Nelson died.

That was a sight to see, boys,
On which that morning shone;
We counted three-and-thirty,
Mounseer and stately Don;
And plain their great three-deckers
Amongst them we desried, —
"Safe," we said, "for Spithead,"
That day that Nelson died.

Then Nelson spoke to Hardy,
Upon his face the smile,
The very look he wore when
We beat them at the Nile!
"We must have twenty, Hardy,"
'T was thus the hero cried;
And we had twenty, lads,
That day that Nelson died.

TRAfalgar

Up went his latest signal;
Ah, well, my boys, he knew
That not a man among us
But would his duty do!
And as the signal flew, boys,
With shouts each crew replied;
How we cheered as we neared
The foe, when Nelson died!

We led the weather column,
But Collingwood, ahead,
A mile from all, the lee line
Right through the Frenchman led;
“And what would Nelson give to
Be here with us!” he cried,
As he bore through their roar
That day that Nelson died.

Well, on the Victory stood, boys,
With every sail full spread;
And as we neared them slowly
There was but little said.
There were thoughts of home amongst us,
And as their line we eyed,
Here and there, perhaps, a prayer,
That day that Nelson died.

A gun,—the Bucentaure first
Began with us the game;
Another,—then their broadsides
From all sides through us came;

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

With men fast falling round us,
While not a gun replied,
With sails rent, on we went,
That day that Nelson died.

"Steer for their admiral's flag, boys!"
But where it flew none knew;
"Then make for that four-decker,"
Said Nelson, "men, she'll do!"
So, at their Trinidad,
To get we straightway tried,
As we broke through their smoke,
That day that Nelson died.

'T was where they clustered thickest
That through their line we broke,
And to their Bucentaure first
Our thundering broadside spoke,
We shaved her; — as our shots, boys,
Crashed through her shattered side,
She could feel how to keel,
That day that Nelson died.

Into the Don's four-decker
Our larboard broadsides pour,
Though all we well could spare her
Went to the Bucentaure.
Locked to another Frenchman,
Our starboard fire we plied,
Gun to gun, till we won,
That day that Nelson died.

TRAFalGAR



TRAFAVGAR

“They’ve done for me at last, friend!”

’T was thus they heard him say,

“But I die as I would die, boys,

Upon this glorious day;

I’ve done my duty, Hardy,”

He cried, and still he cried, —

As below, sad and slow,

We bore him as he died.

On wounded and on dying

The cockpit’s lamp shone dim;

But many a groan we heard, lads,

Less for themselves than him.

And many a one among them

Had given, and scarcely sighed,

A limb to save him

Who there in glory died.

As slowly life ebbed from him

His thoughts were still the same:

“How many have we now, boys?”

Still faint and fainter came.

As ship on ship struck to us

His glazing eyes with pride,

As it seemed, flashed and gleamed,

As he knew he conquering died.

We beat them — how, you know, boys,

Yet many an eye was dim;

And when we talked of triumph,

We only thought of him.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

And still, though fifty years, boys,
Have gone, who, without pride,
Names his name,— tells his fame,
Who at Trafalgar died!

THE CROSSING OF THE BERESINA RIVER

[1812]

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT

THE river Beresina flows rapidly along its channel a few miles beyond Borisoff. The retreating Russians had destroyed the bridge. Upon the opposite bank of the river they had planted very formidable batteries. Napoleon remained two days at Borisoff refreshing his troops. On the 25th, a variety of movements were made to deceive the enemy as to the point at which he intended to cross the river. In the mean time, with secrecy, arrangements were made for constructing a bridge where a dense forest would conceal their operations from view. The Russians, in vast numbers, occupied the adjacent heights. The French troops were secreted all day in the woods, ready to commence the construction of the bridge the moment night should come. Hardly had the winter's sun gone down behind the frozen hills ere they sprang to their work. No fire could be allowed. They worked through the long and dark night, many of them often up to their necks in water, and struggling against immense masses of ice, which were floated down by the stream. The tires of the wheels were wrenched off for cramp-irons, and cottages were torn down for timber.

Napoleon superintended the work in person, toiling with the rest. He uttered not a word which could indicate any want of confidence in this desperate adventure. He was surrounded by three armies, constituting a mass

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

of one hundred and fifty thousand men. "In this situation," says the Russian historian Boutourlin, "the most perilous in which he had ever found himself, the great captain was in no way inferior to himself. Without allowing himself to be dismayed by the imminence of his danger, he dared to measure it with the eye of genius, and still found resources when a general less skillful and less determined would not even have suspected its possibility."

The French generals deemed the passage of the river utterly impracticable. Rapp, Mortier, and Ney declared that, if escape were now effected, they should forever after believe in the emperor's protecting star. Even Murat, constitutionally bold and reckless as he was, declared that it was time to relinquish all thoughts of rescuing any but the emperor, on whose fate the salvation of France depended. The soldiers in the ranks expressed similar fears and desires. Some Polish officers volunteered to extricate Napoleon by guiding him through obscure paths in the forest to the frontiers of Prussia. Poniatowski, who commanded the Polish division, offered to pledge his life for the success of the enterprise; but Napoleon promptly rejected the suggestion as implying a cowardly and dishonorable flight. He would not forsake the army in this hour of its greatest peril.

"Napoleon," says Segur, "at once rejected this project as infamous, as being a cowardly flight; he was indignant that any one should dare to think for a moment that he would abandon his army so long as it was in danger. He was, however, not at all displeased with Murat, either because that prince, in making the proposition, had afforded him an opportunity of showing his

THE CROSSING OF THE BERESINA RIVER

firmness, or, what is more probable, because he saw in it nothing but a mark of devotion, and because in the eyes of a sovereign, the first quality is attachment to his person."

At last the day faintly dawned in the east. The Russian watch-fires began to pale. Napoleon, by the movements of the preceding day, had effectually deceived his foes. The bewildered Russian admiral consequently commenced withdrawing his forces from Studzianca just as Napoleon commenced concentrating his army there. The French generals, who were anxiously, with their glasses, peering through the dusk of the morning to the opposite heights, could hardly believe their eyes when they saw the Russians rapidly retreating. The Russians had received orders to hasten to a point some eighteen miles down the river, where the admiral was convinced, by the false demonstrations of Napoleon, that the French intended to attempt the passage.

Oudinot and Rapp hastened to the emperor with the joyful tidings. Napoleon exclaimed, "Then I have outwitted the admiral!" A squadron of horsemen swam, on their skeleton steeds, through the icy waves, and took possession of the opposite bank. The bridge was soon finished, and two light rafts were constructed. The passage of the troops was now urged with the utmost rapidity. In the course of a few hours the engineers succeeded in constructing another bridge for the transportation of the baggage and the cannon. During the whole of that bleak winter's day, and of the succeeding night, the French army, with its encumbering multitude of stragglers, were crowding across these narrow defiles. In the mean time the Russians began to return. They planted

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

their batteries upon the adjacent heights, and swept the bridge with a storm of cannon balls. Early in the morning of the 27th, the foe had accumulated in such numbers as to be prepared to make a simultaneous attack upon the French on both sides of the river. Napoleon had crossed with the advanced guard. On attaining the right bank of the river, he exclaimed, "My star still reigns!"

An awful conflict now ensued. The Russians were impelled by the confidence of success; the French were nerved by the energies of despair. In the midst of this demoniac scene of horror, mutilation, and blood, a fearful tempest arose, howling through the dark forests, and sweeping with hurricane fury over the embattling hosts. One of the frail bridges broke beneath the weight of artillery, baggage, and troops with which it was burdened. A vast and frenzied crowd were struggling at the heads of the bridges. Cannon balls ploughed through the living, tortured mass. They trampled upon each other. Multitudes were crowded into the stream, and with shrieks which pierced through the thunders of the battle, sank beneath the floating ice. The genius of Napoleon was never more conspicuous than on this occasion. It is the testimony alike of friend and foe, that no other man could have accomplished what he accomplished in the awful passage of the Beresina.

Undismayed by the terrific scene and by the magnitude of his peril, he calmly studied all his chances, and, with his feeble band, completely thwarted and overthrew his multitudinous foes. It is difficult to ascertain the precise numbers in this engagement. According to Segur, who is perhaps the best authority to whom we can refer,

PASSAGE OF THE BERESINA



THE CROSSING OF THE BERESINA RIVER

Napoleon had but twenty-seven thousand fighting men, and these were exhausted, half famished, and miserably clothed and armed. There were also forty thousand stragglers and wounded embarrassing his movements and claiming his care. Sixty thousand Russians, well fed and perfectly armed, surrounded him. General Wittgenstein, with forty thousand effective men, marched upon the portion of the army which had not yet crossed the stream. Marshal Victor, with but six thousand men, baffled all his efforts, and for hours held this vast force at bay. Admiral Tchitchagoff, with twenty thousand men, attacked the columns which had crossed. Ney, with eight thousand troops, plunged into the dense mass of foes, drove them before him, and took six thousand prisoners.

Through all these awful hours the engineers worked in preserving and repairing the bridges, with coolness which no perils could disturb. The darkness of the night put no end to the conflict. The Russians trained their guns to bear upon the confused mass of men, horses, and wagons crowding and overwhelming the bridges.

In the midst of all the horrors of the scene, a little boat, carrying a mother and her two children, was overturned by the floating ice. A soldier plunged from the bridge into the river, and, by great exertions, saved the youngest of the two children. The poor little thing, in tones of despair, kept crying for its mother. The tender-hearted soldier was heard endeavoring to soothe it, saying, "Do not cry. I will not abandon you. You shall want for nothing. I will be your father."

Women were in the midst of the stream, struggling against the floating ice, with their children in their

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

arms; and when the mother was completely submerged in the cold flood, her stiffened arms were seen still holding her child above the waves. Across this bridge the soldiers bore tenderly the orphan child which Marshal Ney had saved at Smolensk.

Many persons were crushed and ground to pieces by the rush of heavy carriages. Bands of soldiers cleared their way across the bridge, through the encumbering crowd, with their bayonets and their swords. The wounded and the dead were trampled miserably under their feet. Night came, cold, dark, and dreary, and did but increase these awful calamities. Everything was covered with snow. The black mass of men, horses, and carriages, traversing this white surface, enabled the Russian artillermen, from the heights which they occupied, unerringly to direct their fire. The howling of the tempest, the gloom of midnight, the incessant flash and roar of artillery, the sweep of cannon balls through the dense mass, and the frightful explosion of shells, the whistling of bullets, the vociferations and shouts of the soldiers, the shrieks of the wounded and despairing, and the wild hurrahs of the Cossacks, presented one of the most appalling scenes which demoniac war has ever exhibited. The record alone one would think enough to appall the most selfish and merciless lover of military glory. At last Victor, having protected the passage of all the regular troops, led his valiant corps across, and set fire to the bridges. The number lost on this occasion has never been ascertained. When the ice melted in the spring, twelve thousand dead bodies were dragged from the river.

WATERLOO

[1815]

BY DOUGLAS BROOKE WHEELTON SLADEN

[“THE battle of Waterloo was fought on a glorious day in June; a Sabbath day, clear and warm after the heavy rain of the night, which had entirely ceased ere the roar of battle began. At home, mothers and sisters and sweethearts were praying for the safety of those dear to them who were about to engage in deadly combat. It was while these loved ones were engaged in their devotions at church that the battle commenced, and from many a maiden’s heart, in Kent and elsewhere, went out a fervent petition asking divine protection for the one dearer to her than life; and many a noble boy fought better and died more heroically that awful day, knowing that such a woman was praying for him.”]

“WHAT struck?”

“Half-past ten o’clock.”

As over his saddle-bow he bent,
He thought of the village church in Kent,
And said, “She’ll be kneeling soon to pray —
Perhaps for me, on this Sabbath day.”

Ping! ping!

Hark the bullets wing!

Their cuirassiers sweep across the plain.

“Charge them, our Life Guards!” — They turn again;
While English beauty is on its knees
For English valor across the seas.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

There goes
The Vanguard of the foes!
They've taken the wood by Hougoumont!
“Coldstreams and Fusiliers to the front!”
Taken again, lads! that's not amiss;
Your sweethearts at home will boast of this.

Pell-mell,
Bullet, shot, and shell
Rained on our infantry thick and fast;
Many a stout heart will beat its last;
Blue eyes will moisten many a day
For good lives lightly given away.

Crash, clash,
Like a torrent's dash,
Lancer and cuirassier leap on the square!
Scarcely a third of the bayonets there.
Ye who would look on old England again,
Now must ye prove yourselves Englishmen.

Stamp, stamp,
With its even tramp,
Rolls uphill the invincible Guard:
Falters it at the fiftieth yard?
Weak, worn, and oft assaulted the foe,
Yet never its heart misgave it so.

On, on,
And the fight is won!
Shot-stricken linesman and thrice-charged Guard
Glare at them lion-like, hungry and hard;

WATERLOO

His waiting is done — his hour has come;
Pent-up fierceness drives bayonets home.

On, on,
Life Guard and Dragoon!
An English charge and a red right hand
Will bring fair years to your fair old land.
With riven corselet and shivered lance,
Is reft and shivered the pride of France.

Still, still,
In the moonlight chill,
A dying Dragoon looks up to a friend:
“Tell her I did my part to the end —
Tell her I died as an Englishman should —
And give her — her handkerchief — it is my blood.”

There went,
From a church in Kent,
An eager and anxious prayer to God
For lovers, brothers, and sons abroad:
The fairest and noblest prayed for one —
Neither lover, nor brother, nor son.

A calm
After hymn and psalm:
The preacher in silent thought is bowed,
Ere he gives out the bidding prayer aloud.
Hark! what can that long, dull booming be,
Swept by the east wind across the sea?

Boom, boom,
Like the voice of doom!

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

The preacher has fought, and knows full well
The message that booming has to tell,
And gives out his text: "Let God arise,
And he shall scatter our enemies."

One night
In two memories bright;
One golden hour unwatched at a ball,
A kerchief taken or given was all.
"Off to the war to-morrow — good-bye —
I'll carry it with me until I die!"

He is dead!
"You have come," she said,
"To bring me tidings of him I loved?
Your face has told me your tale — he proved
Worthy the name I did not know,
The man that I thought him a year ago."

"He died
With stern English pride,
But lived to fight the great battle through;
His last words were of England and you;
He died as an English gentleman should,
And sent you — your handkerchief — rich with his
blood."

"Ah me!
Life is sad," moaned she,
"When all the sun in its sky hath flown!"
And "One loving bosom is very lone."
And "Oh, if I might lie by you
In your soldier's grave at Waterloo!"

“SCOTLAND FOREVER!”

THE CHARGE OF THE SCOTS GREYS AT WATERLOO



WATERLOO

[1815]

BY VICTOR HUGO

THE EMPEROR PUTS A QUESTION TO THE GUIDE LACOSTE

At the moment when Wellington drew back, Napoleon started up. He saw the plateau of Mont St.-Jean suddenly laid bare and the front of the English army disappear. It rallied, but kept concealed. The Emperor half rose in his stirrups. The flash of a victory passed into his eyes.

Wellington hurled back on the Forest of Soignes and destroyed; that was the final overthrow of England by France; it was Cressy, Poitiers, Malplaquet, and Ramillies avenged. The man of Marengo was wiping out Agincourt.

The Emperor, then, contemplating this terrible turn of fortune, swept his glass for the last time over every point of the battle-field. His Guard, standing behind, with grounded arms, looked up to him with a sort of religion. He was reflecting; he was examining the slopes, noting the ascents, scrutinizing the tufts of the trees, the square rye field, the footpath; he seemed to count every bush. He looked for some time at the English barricades on the two roads, two large abattis of trees, that on the Genappe road above La Haye Sainte, armed with two cannon, which alone, of all the English artillery, bore upon the bottom of the field of battle, and that of the Nivelles road, where glistened the Dutch

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

bayonets of Chassé's brigade. He noticed near that barricade the old chapel of St. Nicholas, painted white, which is at the corner of the cross-road toward Braine l'Alleud. He bent over and spoke in an undertone to the guide Lacoste. The guide made a negative sign of the head, probably treacherous.

The Emperor rose up and reflected. Wellington had fallen back. It remained only to complete this repulse by a crushing charge.

Napoleon, turning abruptly, sent off a courier at full speed to Paris to announce that the battle was won.

Napoleon was one of those geniuses who rule the thunder.

He had found his thunderbolt.

He ordered Milhaud's cuirassiers to carry the plateau of Mont St.-Jean.

THE UNLOOKED-FOR

They were 3500. They formed a line of half a mile. They were gigantic men on colossal horses. There were twenty-six squadrons, and they had behind them, as a support, the division of Lefebvre-Desnoettes, the 106 gendarmes d'élite, the chasseurs of the guard, 1197 men, and the lancers of the guard, 880 lances. They wore casques without plumes, and cuirasses of wrought iron, with horse pistols in their holsters and long saber-swords. In the morning they had been the admiration of the whole army, when, at 9 o'clock, with trumpets sounding, and all the bands playing "Veillons au salut de l'empire," they came, in heavy columns, one of their batteries on their flank, the other at their center, and deployed in

WATERLOO

two ranks between the Genappe road and Frischemont, and took their position of battle in this powerful second line, so wisely made up by Napoleon, which, having at its extreme left the cuirassiers of Kellermann and at its extreme right the cuirassiers of Milhaud, had, so to speak, two wings of iron.

Aide-de-camp Bernard brought them the Emperor's order. Ney drew his sword and placed himself at their head. The enormous squadrons began to move.

Then was seen a fearful sight.

All this cavalry, with sabers drawn, banners waving, and trumpets sounding, formed in column by divisions, descended with an even movement and as one man — with the precision of a bronze battering-ram opening a breach — the hill of La Belle-Alliance, sank into the formidable depths where so many men had already fallen, disappeared in the smoke, then rising from this valley of shadow reappeared on the other side, still compact and serried, mounting at full trot, through a cloud of grape emptying itself upon them, the frightful acclivity of mud of the plateau of Mont St.-Jean. They rose, serious and menacing, imperturbable; in the intervals of the musketry and artillery could be heard the sound of this colossal tramp. Being in two divisions, they formed two columns; Wathier's division had the right, Delord's the left. From a distance they would be taken for two immense serpents of steel stretching themselves toward the crest of the plateau. That ran through the battle like a prodigy.

Nothing like it had been seen since the taking of the grand redoubt at La Moscowa, by the heavy cavalry; Murat was not there, but Ney was there. It seemed as

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

if this mass had become a monster, and had but a single mind. Each squadron undulated and swelled like the ring of a polyp. They could be seen through the thick smoke as it was broken here and there. It was one pell-mell of casques, cries, sabers, a furious bounding of horses among the cannon, and the flourish of trumpets, a terrible and disciplined tumult; over all the cuirasses, like the scales of a hydra.

These recitals appear to belong to another age. Something like this vision appeared, doubtless, in the old Orphic epics which tell of centaurs, antique happenthropes, those titans with human faces, and chests like horses, whose gallop scaled Olympus, horrible, invulnerable, sublime; at once gods and beasts.

An odd numerical coincidence, twenty-six battalions, were to receive these twenty-six squadrons. Behind the crest of the plateau, under cover of the masked battery, the English infantry formed in thirteen squares, two battalions to the square and upon two lines — seven on the first and six on the second — with musket to the shoulder, and eye upon their sights, waiting calm, silent, and immovable. They could not see the cuirassiers, and the cuirassiers could not see them. They listened to the rising of this tide of men. They heard the increasing sound of three thousand horses, the alternate and measured striking of their hoofs at full trot, the rattling of the cuirasses, the clicking of sabers, and a sort of fierce roar of the coming host. There was a moment of fearful silence; then, suddenly a long line of raised arms brandishing sabers appeared above the crest, with casques, trumpets, and standards, and three thousand faces with gray mustaches, crying, "*Vive l'Empereur!*" All this

WATERLOO

cavalry debouched on the plateau, and it was like the beginning of an earthquake.

All at once, tragic to relate, at the left of the English, and on our right, the head of the column of cuirassiers reared with a frightful clamor. Arrived at the culminating point of the crest, unmanageable, full of fury, and bent upon the extermination of the squares and cannons, the cuirassiers saw between themselves and the English a ditch, a grave. It was the sunken road of Ohain.

It was a frightful moment. There was the ravine, unlooked for, yawning at the very feet of the horses, two fathoms deep between its double slope. The second rank pushed in the first, the third pushed in the second, the horses reared, threw themselves over, fell upon their backs and struggled with their feet in the air, piling up and overturning their riders, no power to retreat; the whole column was nothing but a projectile. The force acquired to crush the English crushed the French. The inexorable ravine could not yield until it was filled; riders and horses rolled in together pell-mell, grinding each other, making common flesh in this dreadful gulf, and when this grave was full of living men the rest marched over them and passed on. Almost a third of the Dubois' brigade sank into this abyss.

Here the loss of the battle began.

A local tradition, which evidently exaggerates, says that two thousand horses and fifteen hundred men were buried in the sunken road of Ohain. This undoubtedly comprises all the other bodies thrown into this ravine on the morrow after the battle.

Napoleon, before ordering this charge of Milhaud's

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

cuirassiers, had examined the ground, but could not see this hollow road, which did not make even a wrinkle on the surface of the plateau. Warned, however, and put on his guard by the little white chapel which marks its junction with the Nivelles road, he had, probably, on the contingency of an obstacle, put a question to the guide, Lacoste. The guide had answered no. It may almost be said that from this shake of a peasant's head came the catastrophe of Napoleon.

Still other fatalities must arise.

Was it possible that Napoleon should win this battle? We answer — no! Why? Because of Wellington? Because of Blücher? No! Because of God.

For Bonaparte to be conqueror at Waterloo was not in the law of the nineteenth century. Another series of facts were preparing in which Napoleon had no place. The ill will of events had long been announced.

It was time that this vast man should fall.

The excessive weight of this man in human destiny disturbed the equilibrium. This individual counted of himself more than the universe besides. These plethoras of all human vitality concentrated in a single head, the world mounting to the brain of one man, would be fatal to civilization if they should endure. The moment had come for incorruptible supreme equity to look to it. Probably the principles and elements upon which regular gravitations in the moral order as well as in the material depend, began to murmur. Reeking blood, overcrowded cemeteries, weeping mothers, — these are formidable pleaders. When the earth is suffering from a surcharge, there are mysterious moanings from the deeps which the heavens hear.

WATERLOO

Napoleon had been impeached before the infinite and his fall was decreed.

He vexed God.

Waterloo is not a battle; it is the change of front of the universe.

THE PLATEAU OF MONT ST.-JEAN

At the same time with the ravine, the artillery was unmasked.

Sixty cannon and thirteen squares thundered and flashed into the cuirassiers. The brave General Delord gave the military salute to the English battery.

All the English flying artillery took position in the squares at a gallop. The cuirassiers had not even time to breathe. The disaster of the sunken road had decimated but not discouraged them. They were men who, diminished in number, grew greater in heart.

Wathier's column alone had suffered from the disaster; Delord's which Ney had sent obliquely to the left, as if he had a presentiment of the snare, arrived entire.

The cuirassiers hurled themselves upon the English squares.

At full gallop, with free rein, their sabers in their teeth, and their pistols in their hands, the attack began.

There are moments in battle when the soul hardens a man even to changing the soldier into a statue, and all this flesh becomes granite. The English battalions, desperately assailed, did not yield an inch.

Then it was frightful.

All sides of the English squares were attacked at once. A whirlwind of frenzy enveloped them. This frigid in-

THE BOY'S BOOK OF BATTLES

fantry remained impassible. The first rank, with knee on the ground, received the cuirassiers on their bayonets, the second shot them down; behind the second rank, the cannoneers loaded their guns, the front of the square opened, made way for an eruption of grape, and closed again. The cuirassiers answered by rushing upon them with crushing force. Their great horses reared, trampled upon the ranks, leaped over the bayonets and fell, gigantic in the midst of these four living walls. The balls made gaps in the ranks of the cuirassiers, the cuirassiers made breaches in the squares. Files of men disappeared, ground down beneath the horses' feet. Bayonets were buried in the bellies of these centaurs. Hence a monstrosity of wounds never, perhaps, seen elsewhere. The squares, consumed by this furious cavalry, closed up, without wavering. Inexhaustible in grape, they kept up an explosion in the midst of their assailants. It was a monstrous sight. These squares were battalions no longer, they were craters; these cuirassiers were cavalry no longer, they were a tempest. Each square was a volcano attacked by a thunder-cloud; the lava fought with the lightning.

The square, on the extreme right, the most exposed of all, being in the open field, was almost annihilated at the first shock. It was formed of the 75th Regiment of Highlanders. The piper in the center, while the work of extermination was going on, profoundly oblivious of all about him, casting down his melancholy eye full of the shadows of forests and lakes, seated upon a drum, his bagpipe under his arm, was playing his mountain airs. These Scotchmen died thinking of Ben Lothian, as the Greeks died remembering Argo. The saber of a cuiras-

WATERLOO

sier, striking down the pibroch and the arm which bore it, caused the strain to cease by killing the player.

The cuirassiers, relatively few in number, lessened by the catastrophe of the ravine, had to contend with almost the whole of the English army; but they multiplied themselves; each man became equal to ten. Nevertheless, some Hanoverian battalions fell back. Wellington saw it and remembered his cavalry. Had Napoleon, at that very moment, remembered his infantry, he would have won the battle. This forgetfulness was his great, fatal blunder.

Suddenly the assailing cuirassiers perceived that they were assailed. The English cavalry was upon their back. Before them, the squares, behind them Somerset; Somerset with the fourteen hundred dragoon guards. Somerset had on his right Dornberg, with his German light horse, and on his left Trip, with the Belgian carabiniers. The cuirassiers, attacked front, flank, and rear, by infantry and cavalry, were compelled to face in all directions. What was that to them? They were a whirlwind. Their valor became unspeakable.

Besides, they had behind them the ever-thundering artillery. All that was necessary in order to wound such men in the back. One of their cuirasses, with a hole in the left shoulder blade, made by a musket ball, is in the collection of the Waterloo Museum.

With such Frenchmen only such Englishmen could cope.

It was no longer a conflict; it was a darkness, a fury, a giddy vortex of souls and courage, a hurricane of sword flashes. In an instant the fourteen hundred horse guards were but eight hundred. Fuller, their lieutenant-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

colonel, fell dead. Ney rushed up with the lancers and chasseurs of Lefebvre-Desnouettes. The plateau of Mont St.-Jean was taken, retaken, and taken again. The cuirassiers left the cavalry to return to the infantry, or, more correctly, all this terrible multitude wrestled with each other without letting go their hold. The squares still held. There were twelve assaults. Ney had four horses killed under him. Half of the cuirassiers lay on the plateau. This struggle lasted two hours.

The English army was terribly shaken. There is no doubt, if they had not been crippled in their first shock by the disaster of the sunken road, the cuirassiers would have overwhelmed the center and decided the victory. This wonderful cavalry astounded Clinton, who had seen Talavera and Badajos. Wellington, though three fourths conquered, was struck with heroic admiration. He said, in a low voice, "Splendid!"

The cuirassiers annihilated seven squares out of thirteen, took or spiked sixty pieces of cannon, and took from the English regiments six colors, which three cuirassiers and three chasseurs of the guard carried to the Emperor before the farm of La Belle-Alliance.

The situation of Wellington was growing worse. This strange battle was like a duel between two wounded infurates, who, while yet fighting and resisting, lose all their blood. Which of the two shall fall first?

The struggle of the plateau continued.

How far did the cuirassiers penetrate? None can tell. One thing is certain: the day after the battle a cuirassier and his horse were found dead under the frame of the hay-scales at Mont St.-Jean, at the point where the four roads from Nivelles, Genappe, La Hulpe, and Brussels

WATERLOO

meet. This horseman had pierced the English lines. One of the men who took away the body still lives at Mont St.-Jean. His name is Dehaze; he was then eighteen years old.

Wellington felt he was giving away. The crisis was upon him. The cuirassiers had not succeeded, in this sense, that the center was not broken. All holding the plateau, nobody held it; and, in fact, it remained for the most part with the English. Wellington held the village and the crowning plain. Ney held only the crest and the slope. On both sides they seemed rooted in this funeral soil.

But the enfeeblement of the English appeared irremediable. The hemorrhage of this army was horrible. Kempt, on the left wing, called for reinforcements. "Impossible," answered Wellington, "we must die on the spot we now occupy." Almost at the same moment — singular coincidence, which depicts the exhaustion of both armies — Ney sent to Napoleon for infantry, and Napoleon exclaimed: "Infantry! where does he expect me to take them? Does he expect me to make them?"

However, the English army was farthest gone. The furious onslaughts of these great squadrons, with iron cuirasses and steel breastplates had ground up the infantry. A few men about a flag marked the place of a regiment; battalions were now commanded by captains or lieutenants. Alten's division, already so cut up at La Haye Sainte, was almost destroyed; the intrepid Belgians of Van Kluze's brigade strewed the rye field along the Nivelles road; there were hardly any left of those Dutch grenadiers who, in 1811, joined to our ranks in Spain, fought against Wellington, and who, in 1815,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

rallied on the English side, fought against Napoleon. The loss of officers was heavy. Lord Uxbridge, who buried his leg next day, had a knee fractured. If, on the side of the French, in this struggle of the cuirassiers, Delord, l'Héritier, Colbert, Dnop, Travers, and Blan-card were *hors de combat*, on the side of the English Alten was wounded, Barne was wounded, Delancey was killed, Van Meeren was killed. Ompteda was killed, the entire staff of Wellington was decimated, and England had the worst share in this balance of blood. The 2d Regiment of foot guards had lost five lieutenant-colonels, four captains and three ensigns; the first battalion of the 30th Infantry had lost twenty-four officers and one hundred and twelve soldiers; the 79th Highlanders had twenty-four officers wounded, eighteen officers killed, and four hundred and fifty soldiers slain. Cumberland's Hanoverian hussars, an entire regiment, having at its head Colonel Hacke, who was afterward court-martialed and broken, had drawn rein before the fight, and were in flight in the Forest of Soignes, spreading the panic as far as Brussels. Carts, ammunition-wagons, baggage-wagons, ambulances full of wounded, seeing the French gain ground and approach the forest, fled precipitately; the Dutch, sabered by the French cavalry cried "Murder!" From Vert Coucou to Groenendaal, for a distance of nearly six miles in the direction toward Brussels, the roads, according to the testimony of witnesses still alive, were choked with fugitives. This panic was such that it reached the Prince of Condé at Malines, and Louis XVIII at Ghent. With the exception of the small reserve drawn up in echelon behind the hospital established at the farm of Mont St.-Jean,

WATERLOO

and the brigades of Vivian and Vandeleur on the flank of the left wing, Wellington's cavalry was exhausted. A number of batteries lay dismounted. These facts are confessed by Siborne; and Pringle, exaggerating the disaster, says even that the Anglo-Dutch army was reduced to 34,000 men. The Iron Duke remained calm, but his lips were pale. The Austrian commissary, Vincent, the Spanish commissary, Olava, present at the battle of the English staff, thought the Duke was beyond hope. At 5 o'clock Wellington drew out his watch, and was heard to murmur these somber words: "Blücher or night."

It was about this time that a distant line of bayonets glistened on the heights beyond Frischemont.

Here is the turning-point in this colossal drama.

BAD GUIDE FOR NAPOLEON: GOOD GUIDE FOR BÜLOW

We understand the bitter mistake of Napoleon; Grouchy hoped for, Blücher arriving; death instead of life.

Destiny has such turnings. Awaiting the world's throne, St. Helena became visible.

If the little cowboy, who acted as guide to Bülow, Blücher's lieutenant, had advised him to debouch from the forest about Frischemont rather than below Planchenoit, the shaping of the nineteenth century would perhaps have been different. Napoleon would have won the battle of Waterloo. By any other road than below Planchenoit, the Prussian army would have brought up at a ravine impassable for artillery, and Bülow would not have arrived.

Now, an hour of delay, as the Prussian general,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Müffling, declares, and Blücher would not have found Wellington in position; "the battle was lost."

It was time, we have seen, that Bülow should arrive. He had bivouacked at Dion le Mont, and started on at dawn. But the roads were impracticable, and his division stuck in the mire. The cannon sank to the hubs in the ruts. Furthermore, he had to cross the Dyle on the narrow bridge of Wavre; the street leading to the bridge had been fired by the French; the caissons and artillery wagons, being unable to pass between two rows of burning houses, had to wait till the fire was extinguished. It was noon before Bülow could reach Chapelle St.-Lambert.

Had the action commenced two hours earlier it would have been finished at four o'clock, and Blücher would have fallen upon a field already won by Napoleon. Such are these immense chances, proportioned to an infinity, which we cannot grasp.

As early as midday the Emperor, first of all, with his field-glass, perceived in the extreme horizon something which fixed his attention. He said: "I see yonder a cloud which appears to me to be troops." Then he asked the Duke of Dalmatia: "Soult, what do you see toward Chapelle St.-Lambert?" The marshal, turning his glass that way, answered, "Four or five thousand men, sire. Grouchy, of course." Meanwhile, it remained motionless in the haze. The glasses of the whole staff studied "the cloud" pointed out by the Emperor. Some said: "They are columns halting." The most said: "It is trees." The fact is that the cloud did not stir. The Emperor detached Domon's division of light cavalry to reconnoiter this obscure point.

WATERLOO

Bülow, in fact, had not moved. His vanguard was very weak and could do nothing. He had to wait for the bulk of his *corps d'armée*, and he was ordered to concentrate his force before entering into line; but at five o'clock, seeing Wellington's peril, Blücher ordered Bülow to attack, and uttered these remarkable words: "We must give the English army a breathing spell."

Soon after, the divisions of Losthin, Hiller, Hacke, and Ryssel deployed in front of Lobau's corps, the cavalry of Prince William of Prussia debouched from the wood of Paris, Planchenoit was in flames, and the Prussian balls began to rain down even in the ranks of the Guard in reserve behind Napoleon.

THE GUARD

The rest is known; the irruption of a third army, the battle thrown out of joint, eighty-six pieces of artillery suddenly thundering forth, Pirch the First coming up with Bülow, Ziethen's cavalry led by Blücher in person, the French crowded back, Marcognet swept from the plateau of Ohain, Durutte dislodged from Papelotte, Donzelot and Quiot recoiling, Lobau taken *en écharpe*, a new battle falling at nightfall upon our dismantled regiments, the whole English line assuming the offensive and pushed forward, the gigantic gap made in the French army, the English grape and the Prussian grape lending mutual aid, extermination, disaster in front, disaster in flank, the Guard entering into line amid this terrible crumbling.

Feeling that they were going to their death they cried out: "*Vive l'Empereur!*" There is nothing more touch-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

ing in history than this death agony bursting forth in acclamations.

The sky has been overcast all day. All at once, at this very moment—it was eight o'clock at night—the clouds in the horizon broke, and through the elms on the Nivelles road streamed the sinister red light of the setting sun. The rising sun shone upon Austerlitz.

Each battalion of the Guard, for this final effort, was commanded by a general. Friant, Michel, Roguet, Harlet, Mallet, Poret de Morvan, were there. When the tall caps of the grenadiers of the Guard, with their large eagle plates, appeared, symmetrical, drawn up in line, calm, in the smoke of that conflict, the enemy felt respect for France; they thought they saw twenty victories entering upon the field of battle with wings extended, and those who were conquerors, thinking themselves conquered, recoiled; but Wellington cried "Up, Guards, and at them!" The red regiment of English Guards lying behind the hedges, rose up, a shower of grape riddled the tricolored flag fluttering about our eagles, all hurled themselves forward, and the final carnage began. The Imperial Guard felt the army slipping away around them in the gloom, and the vast overthrow of the rout; they heard the "*Sauve qui peut!*"¹ which had replaced the "*Vive l'Empereur!*" and, with flight behind them, they held on their course, battered more and more and dying faster and faster at every step. There were no weak souls or cowards there. The privates of that band were as heroic as their general. Not a man flinched from the suicide.

Ney, desperate, great in all the grandeur of accepted

¹ Save yourselves.

WATERLOO

death, bared himself to every blow in this tempest. He had his horse killed under him. Reeking with sweat, fire in his eyes, froth upon his lips, his uniform unbuttoned, one of his epaulets half cut away by the saber stroke of a horse guard, his badge of the Grand Eagle pierced by a ball, bloody, covered with mud, magnificent, a broken sword in his hand, he said: "Come! and see how a marshal of France dies upon the field of battle!" But in vain; he did not die. He was haggard and exasperated. He flung this question at Drouet d'Erlon: "What! are you not going to die?" He cried out in the midst of all this artillery which was mowing down a handful of men: "Is there nothing, then, for me? Oh! I would that all these English balls were buried in my body!" Unhappy man! thou wast reserved for French bullets!

THE CATASTROPHE

The rout behind the Guard was dismal.

The army fell back rapidly from all sides at once, from Hougoumont, from La Haye Sainte, from Papelotte, from Planchenoit. The cry: "Treachery!" was followed by the cry: "*Sauve qui peut!*" A disbanding army is a thaw. The whole bends, cracks, snaps, floats, rolls, falls, crushes, hurries, plunges. Mysterious disintegration. Ney borrows a horse, leaps upon him, and without hat, cravat, or sword, plants himself in the Brussels road, arresting at once the English and the French. He endeavors to hold the army, to call them back, he reproaches them, he grapples with the rout. He is swept away. The soldiers flee from him, crying: "*Vive le Marshal Ney!*" Durutte's two regiments come and go, frightened and tossed between the sabers of the Uhlans

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

and the fire of the brigades of Kempt, Best, Pack, and Rylandt; rout is the worst of all conflicts; friends slay each other in their flight; squadrons and battalions are crushed and dispersed against each other, enormous foam of the battle. Lobau at one extremity, like Reille at the other, is rolled away in the flood. In vain does Napoleon make walls with the remains of the Guard; in vain does he expend his reserve squadrons in a last effort. Quiot gives way before Vivian, Kellermann before Vandeleur, Lobau before Bülow, Moraud before Pirch, Doman and Lubervic before Prince William of Prussia. Guyot, who had led the Emperor's squadrons to the charge, falls under the feet of the English Horse. Napoleon gallops along the fugitives, harangues them, urges, threatens, entreats. The mouths, which in the morning were crying "*Vive l'Empereur,*" are now agape; he is hardly recognized. The Prussian cavalry, just come up, spring forward, fling themselves upon the enemy, saber, cut, hack, kill, exterminate. Teams rush off, the guns are left to the care of themselves; the soldiers of the train unhitch the caissons and take the horses to escape; wagons upset, with their four wheels in the air, block up the road, and are accessories of massacre. They crush and they crowd; they trample upon the living and the dead. Arms are broken. A multitude fills roads, paths, bridges, plains, hills, valleys, woods, choked up by this flight of forty thousand men. Cries, despair; knapsacks and muskets cast into the rye; passages forced at the point of the sword; no more comrades, no more officers, no more generals; inexpressible dismay. Ziethen sabering France at his ease. Lions become kids. Such was this flight.

EVENING OF THE BATTLE OF
WATERLOO



WATERLOO

At Genappe there was an effort to turn back, to form a line, to make a stand. Lobau rallied three hundred men. The entrance to the village was barricaded, but at the first volley of Prussian grape all took to flight again and Lobau was captured. The marks of that volley of grape are still to be seen upon the old gable of a brick ruin at the right of the road, a short distance before entering Genappe. The Prussians rushed into Genappe, furious, doubtless, at having conquered so little. The pursuit was monstrous. Blücher gave orders to kill all. Roguet had set this sad example by threatening with death every French grenadier who should bring him a Prussian prisoner. Blücher surpassed Roguet. The general of the Young Guard, Duhesme, caught at the door of a tavern in Genappe, gave up his sword to a hussar of death, who took the sword and killed the prisoner. The victory was completed by the assassination of the vanquished. Let us punish, since we are history; old Blücher disgraced himself. This ferocity filled the disaster to the brim. The desperate rout passed through Genappe, passed through Quatre Bras, passed through Sombreffe, passed through Frasness, passed through Thuin, passed through Charleroi, and stopped only at the frontier. Alas! who now was flying in such wise? The grand army.

This madness, this terror, this falling to ruins of the highest bravery which ever astonished history; can that be without cause? No. The shadow of an enormous right hand rests on Waterloo. It is the day of destiny. A power above man controlled that day. Hence, the loss of mind in dismay; hence, all these great souls yielding up their swords. Those who had conquered Europe fell to the ground, having nothing more to say or to do,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

feeling a terrible presence in the darkness. *Hoc erat in fatis.*¹ That day the perspective of the human race changed. Waterloo is the hinge of the nineteenth century. The disappearance of the great man was necessary for the advent of the great century. One, to whom there is no reply, took it in charge. The panic of heroes is explained. In the battle of Waterloo there is more than a cloud, there is a meteor. God passed over it.

In the gathering night, on a field near Genappe, Bernard and Bertrand seized by a flap of his coat and stopped a haggard, thoughtful, gloomy man, who, dragged thus far by the current of the rout, had dismounted, passed the bridle of his horse under his arm, and, with bewildering eye, was returning alone toward Waterloo. It was Napoleon endeavoring to advance again, mighty somnambulist of a vanished dream.

¹ So fate decreed.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

[1854]

BY ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred!
“Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!” he said:
Into the Valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

“Forward, the Light Brigade!”
Was there a man dismay’d?
Not tho’ the soldier knew
 Some one had blunder’d:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.
Into the Valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
 Volley’d and thunder’d;

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well;
Into the jaws of death,
Into the mouth of hell
Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabers bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabering the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd.
Plunged in the battle-smoke,
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the saber-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

THE RETURN OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE



THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
 All the world wonder'd.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade,
 Noble six hundred!

TAKEN PRISONER AT SHILOH

[1862]

BY HENRY M. STANLEY

[HENRY M. STANLEY, the famous African explorer, was born in Wales in 1841. At the age of sixteen he came to America, and on the outbreak of the Civil War enlisted in the Confederate army.]

The Editor.

AT four o'clock in the morning, we rose from our damp bivouac, and, after a hasty refreshment, were formed into line. We stood in rank for half an hour or so, while the military dispositions were being completed along the three-mile front. Our brigade formed the center; Cleburne's and Gladden's brigades were on our respective flanks.

Day broke with every promise of a fine day. Next to me, on my right, was a boy of seventeen, Henry Parker. I remember it because, while we stood-at-ease, he drew my attention to some violets at his feet, and said, "It would be a good idea to put a few into my cap. Perhaps the Yanks won't shoot me if they see me wearing such flowers, for they are a sign of peace." "Capital," said I, "I will do the same." We plucked a bunch, and arranged the violets in our caps. The men in the ranks laughed at our proceedings, and had not the enemy been so near, their merry mood might have been communicated to the army.

We loaded our muskets and arranged our cartridge-pouches ready for use. Our weapons were the obsolete flintlocks, and the ammunition was rolled in cartridge-

TAKEN PRISONER AT SHILOH

paper, which contained powder, a round ball, and three buckshot. When we loaded, we had to tear the paper with our teeth, empty a little powder into the pan, lock it, empty the rest of the powder into the barrel, press paper and ball into the muzzle, and ram home. Then the orderly sergeant called the roll, and we knew that the Dixie Grays were present to a man. Soon after, there was a commotion, and we dressed up smartly. A young aide galloped along our front, gave some instructions to the Brigadier Hindman, who confided the same to his colonels, and presently we swayed forward in line, with shouldered arms. Newton Story, big, broad, and straight, bore our company banner of gay silk, at which the ladies of our neighborhood had labored.

As we tramped solemnly and silently through the thin forest, and over its grass, still in its withered and wintry hue, I noticed that the sun was not far from appearing, that our regiment was keeping its formation admirably, that the woods would have been a grand place for a picnic; and I thought it strange that a Sunday should have been chosen to disturb the holy calm of those woods.

Before we had gone five hundred paces, our serenity was disturbed by some desultory firing in front. It was then a quarter-past five. "They are at it already," we whispered to each other. "Stand by, gentlemen," — for we were all gentlemen volunteers at this time, — said our captain, L. G. Smith. Our steps became unconsciously brisker, and alertness was noticeable in everybody. The firing continued at intervals, deliberate and scattered, as at target-practice. We drew nearer to the firing, and soon a sharper rattling of musketry

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

was heard. "That is the enemy waking up," we said. Within a few minutes, there was another explosive burst of musketry, the air was pierced by many missiles, which hummed and pinged sharply by our ears, pattered through the tree-tops, and brought twigs and leaves down on us. "Those are bullets," Henry whispered with awe.

At two hundred yards farther, a dreadful roar of musketry broke out from a regiment adjoining ours. It was followed by another farther off, and the sound had scarcely died away when regiment after regiment blazed away and made a continuous roll of sound. "We are in for it now," said Henry; but as yet we had seen nothing, though our ears were tingling under the animated volleys.

"Forward, gentlemen, make ready!" urged Captain Smith. In response, we surged forward, for the first time marring the alignment. We trampled recklessly over the grass and young sprouts. Beams of sunlight stole athwart our course. The sun was up above the horizon. Just then we came to a bit of packland, and overtook our skirmishers, who had been engaged in exploring our front. We passed beyond them. Nothing now stood between us and the enemy.

"There they are!" was no sooner uttered than we cracked into them with leveled muskets. "Aim low, men!" commanded Captain Smith. I tried hard to see some living thing to shoot at, for it appeared absurd to be blazing away at shadows. But, still advancing, firing as we moved, I, at last, saw a row of little globes of pearly smoke streaked with crimson, breaking out, with spurtive quickness, from a long line of bluey figures in

TAKEN PRISONER AT SHILOH

front; and, simultaneously, there broke upon our ears an appalling crash of sound, the series of fusillades following one another with startling suddenness, which suggested to my somewhat moiadered sense a mountain upheaved, with huge rocks tumbling and thundering down a slope, and the echoes rambling and receding through space. Again and again, these loud and quick explosions were repeated, seemingly with increased violence, until they rose to the highest pitch of fury, and in unbroken continuity. All the world seemed involved in one tremendous ruin!

This was how the conflict was ushered in — as it affected me. I looked around to see the effect on others, or whether I was singular in my emotions, and was glad to notice that each was possessed with his own thoughts. All were pale, solemn, and absorbed; but, beyond that, it was impossible for me to discover what they thought of it; but by transmission of sympathy, I felt that they would gladly prefer to be elsewhere, though the law of the inevitable kept them in line to meet their destiny. It might be mentioned, however, that at no time were we more instinctively inclined to obey the voice of command. We had no individuality at this moment, but all motions and thoughts were surrendered to the unseen influence which directed our movements. Probably few bothered their minds with self-questionings as to the issue to themselves. That properly belongs to other moments, to the night, to the interval between waking and sleeping, to the first moments of the dawn — not when every nerve is tense, and the spirit is at the highest pitch of action.

Though one's senses were preternaturally acute, and

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

engaged with their impressions, we plied our arms, loaded, and fired, with such nervous haste as though it depended on each of us how soon this fiendish uproar would be hushed. My nerves tingled, my pulses beat double-quick, my heart throbbed loudly, and almost painfully; but, amid all the excitement, my thoughts, swift as the flash of lightning, took all sound, and sight, and self, into their purview. I listened to the battle raging far away on the flanks, to the thunder in front, to the various sounds made by the leaden storm. I was angry with my rear rank, because he made my eyes smart with the powder of his musket; and I felt like cuffing him for deafening my ears! I knew how Captain Smith and Lieutenant Mason looked, how bravely the Dixie Grays' banner ruffled over Newton Story's head, and that all hands were behaving as though they knew how long all this would last. Back to myself my thoughts came, and, with the whirring bullet, they fled to the blue-bloused ranks afront. They dwelt on their movements, and read their temper, as I should read time by a clock. Through the lurid haze the contours of their pink faces could not be seen, but their gappy, hesitating, incoherent, and sensitive line revealed their mood clearly.

We continued advancing, step by step, loading and firing as we went. To every forward step, they took a backward move, loading and firing as they slowly withdrew. Twenty thousand muskets were being fired at this stage, but, though accuracy of aim was impossible, owing to our laboring hearts, and the jarring and excitement, many bullets found their destined billets on both sides.

TAKEN PRISONER AT SHILOH

After a steady exchange of musketry, which lasted some time, we heard the order: "Fix bayonets! On the double-quick!" in tones that thrilled us. There was a simultaneous bound forward, each soul doing his best for the emergency. The Federals appeared inclined to await us; but, at this juncture, our men raised a yell, thousands responded to it, and burst out into the wildest yelling it has ever been my lot to hear. It drove all sanity and order from among us. It served the double purpose of relieving pent-up feelings, and transmitting encouragement along the attacking line. I rejoiced in the shouting like the rest. It reminded me that there were about four hundred companies like the Dixie Grays, who shared our feelings. Most of us, engrossed with the musket-work, had forgotten the fact; but the wave after wave of human voices, louder than all other battle-sounds together, penetrated to every sense, and stimulated our energies to the utmost.

"They fly!" was echoed from lip to lip. It accelerated our pace, and filled us with a noble rage. Then I knew what the berserker passion was! It deluged us with rapture, and transfigured each Southerner into an exulting victor. At such a moment, nothing could have halted us.

Those savage yells, and the sight of thousands of racing figures coming towards them, discomfited the blue-coats; and when we arrived upon the place where they had stood, they had vanished. Then we caught sight of their beautiful array of tents, before which they had made their stand, after being roused from their Sunday-morning sleep, and huddled into line, at hearing their pickets challenge our skirmishers. The half-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

dressed dead and wounded showed what a surprise our attack had been. We drew up in the enemy's camp, panting and breathing hard. Some precious minutes were thus lost in recovering our breaths, indulging our curiosity, and re-forming our line. Signs of a hasty rouse to the battle were abundant. Military equipments, uniform-coats, half-packed knapsacks, bedding, of a new and superior quality, littered the company streets.

Meantime, a series of other camps lay behind the first array of tents. The resistance we had met, though comparatively brief, enabled the brigades in rear of the advance camp to recover from the shock of the surprise; but our delay had not been long enough to give them time to form in proper order of battle. There were wide gaps between their divisions, into which the quick-flowing tide of elated Southerners entered, and compelled them to fall back lest they should be surrounded. Prentiss's brigade, despite their most desperate efforts, were thus hemmed in on all sides, and were made prisoners.

I had a momentary impression that, with the capture of the first camp, the battle was well-nigh over; but, in fact, it was only a brief prologue of the long and exhaustive series of struggles which took place that day.

Continuing our advance, we came in view of the tops of another mass of white tents, and, almost at the same time, were met by a furious storm of bullets, poured on us from a long line of blue-coats, whose attitude of assurance proved to us that we should have tough work here. But we were so much heartened by our first success that it would have required a good deal to have

TAKEN PRISONER AT SHILOH

halted our advance for long. Their opportunity for making a full impression on us came with terrific suddenness. The world seemed bursting into fragments. Cannon and musket, shell and bullet, lent their several intensities to the distracting uproar. If I had not a fraction of an ear, and an eye inclined toward my captain and company, I had been spell-bound by the energies now opposed to us. I likened the cannon, with their deep bass, to the roaring of a great herd of lions; the ripping, cracking musketry, to the incessant yapping of terriers; the windy whisk of shells, and zipping of minie bullets, to the swoop of eagles, and the buzz of angry wasps. All the opposing armies of gray and blue fiercely blazed at each other.

After being exposed for a few seconds to this fearful downpour, we heard the order to "Lie down, men, and continue your firing!" Before me was a prostrate tree, about fifteen inches in diameter, with a narrow strip of light between it and the ground. Behind this shelter a dozen of us flung ourselves. The security it appeared to offer restored me to my individuality. We could fight, and think, and observe, better than out in the open. But it was a terrible period! How the cannon bellowed, and their shells plunged and bounded, and flew with screeching hisses over us! Their sharp rending explosions and hurtling fragments made us shrink and cower, despite our utmost efforts to be cool and collected. I marveled, as I heard the unintermitting patter, snip, thud, and hum of the bullets, how any one could live under this raining death. I could hear the balls beating a merciless tattoo on the outer surface of the log, ping-ing vivaciously as they flew off at a tangent from it, and

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

thudding into something or other, at the rate of a hundred a second. One, here and there, found its way under the log, and buried itself in a comrade's body. One man raised his chest, as if to yawn, and jostled me. I turned to him, and saw that a bullet had gored his whole face, and penetrated into his chest. Another ball struck a man a deadly rap on the head, and he turned on his back and showed his ghastly white face to the sky.

"It is getting too warm, boys!" cried a soldier, and he uttered a vehement curse upon keeping soldiers hugging the ground until every ounce of courage was chilled. He lifted his head a little too high, and a bullet skimmed over the top of the log and hit him fairly in the center of his forehead, and he fell heavily on his face. But his thought had been instantaneously general; and the officers, with one voice, ordered the charge, and cries of "Forward! Forward!" raised us, as with a spring, to our feet, and changed the complexion of our feelings. The pulse of action beat feverishly once more; and, though overhead was crowded with peril, we were unable to give it so much attention as when we lay stretched on the ground.

Just as we bent our bodies for the onset, a boy's voice cried out, "Oh, stop, *please* stop a bit; I have been hurt, and can't move!" I turned to look, and saw Henry Parker, standing on one leg, and dolefully regarding his smashed foot. In another second, we were striding impetuously toward the enemy, vigorously plying our muskets, stopping only to prime the pan and ram the load down, when, with a spring or two, we would fetch up with the front, aim, and fire.

Our progress was not so continuously rapid as we

TAKEN PRISONER AT SHILOH

desired, for the blues were obdurate ; but at this moment we were gladdened at the sight of a battery galloping to our assistance. It was time for the nerve-shaking cannon to speak. After two rounds of shell and canister, we felt the pressure on us slightly relaxed; but we were still somewhat sluggish in disposition, though the officers' voices rang out imperiously. Newton Story at this juncture strode forward rapidly with the Dixies' banner, until he was quite sixty yards ahead of the foremost. Finding himself alone, he halted; and turning to us smilingly, said, "Why don't you come on, boys? You see there is no danger!" His smile and words acted on us like magic. We raised the yell, and sprang lightly and hopefully toward him. "Let's give them hell, boys!" said one. "Plug them plum-center, every time!"

It was all very encouraging, for the yelling and shouting were taken up by thousands. "Forward, forward; don't give them breathing time!" was cried. We instinctively obeyed, and soon came in clear view of the blue-coats, who were scornfully unconcerned at first; but, seeing the leaping tide of men coming on at a tremendous pace, their front dissolved, and they fled in double-quick retreat. Again we felt the "glorious joy of heroes." It carried us on exultingly, rejoicing in the spirit which recognizes nothing but the prey. We were no longer an army of soldiers, but so many schoolboys racing, in which length of legs, wind, and condition tell.

We gained the second line of camps, continued the rush through them, and clean beyond it. It was now about ten o'clock. My physical powers were quite

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

exhausted, and, to add to my discomfiture, something struck me on my belt-clasp, and tumbled me headlong to the ground.

I could not have been many minutes prostrated before I recovered from the shock of the blow and fall, to find my clasp deeply dented and cracked. My company was not in sight. I was grateful for the rest, and crawled feebly to a tree, and plunging my hand into my haversack, ate ravenously. Within half an hour, feeling renovated, I struck north in the direction which my regiment had taken, over a ground strewn with bodies and the débris of war. . . .

I overtook my regiment about one o'clock, and found that it was engaged in one of these occasional spurts of fury. The enemy resolutely maintained their ground, and our side was preparing for another assault. The firing was alternately brisk and slack. We lay down, and availed ourselves of trees, logs, and hollows, and annoyed their upstanding ranks; battery pounded battery, and, meanwhile, we hugged our resting-places closely. Of a sudden, we rose and raced towards the position, and took it by sheer weight and impetuosity, as we had done before. About three o'clock, the battle grew very hot. The enemy appeared to be more concentrated, and immovably sullen. Both sides fired better as they grew more accustomed to the din; but, with assistance from the reserves, we were continually pressing them towards the river Tennessee, without ever retreating an inch.

About this time, the enemy were assisted by the gun-boats, which hurled their enormous projectiles far beyond us; but, though they made great havoc among

TAKEN PRISONER AT SHILOH

the trees, and created terror, they did comparatively little damage to those in close touch with the enemy.

The screaming of the big shells, when they first began to sail over our heads, had the effect of reducing our fire; for they were as fascinating as they were distracting. But we became used to them, and our attention was being claimed more in front. Our officers were more urgent; and, when we saw the growing dike of white cloud that signaled the bullet-storm, we could not be indifferent to the more immediate danger. Dead bodies, wounded men writhing in agony, and assuming every distressful attitude, were frequent sights; but what made us heart-sick was to see, now and then, the well-groomed charger of an officer, with fine saddle, and scarlet and yellow-edged cloth, and brass-tipped holsters, or a stray cavalry or artillery horse, galloping between the lines, snorting with terror, while his entrails, soiled with dust, trailed behind him:

Our officers had continued to show the same alertness and vigor throughout the day; but, as it drew near four o'clock, though they strove to encourage and urge us on, they began to abate somewhat in their energy; and it was evident that the pluckiest of the men lacked the spontaneity and springing ardor which had distinguished them earlier in the day. Several of our company lagged wearily behind, and the remainder showed, by their drawn faces, the effects of their efforts. Yet, after a short rest, they were able to make splendid spurts. As for myself, I had only one wish, and that was for repose. The long-continued excitement, the successive tautening and relaxing of the nerves, the quenchless thirst, made more intense by the fumes of sulphurous powder,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

and the caking grime on the lips, caused by tearing the paper cartridges, and a ravening hunger, all combined, had reduced me to a walking automaton, and I earnestly wished that night would come, and stop all further effort.

Finally, about five o'clock, we assaulted and captured a large camp; after driving the enemy well away from it, the front line was as thin as that of a skirmishing body, and we were ordered to retire to the tents. There we hungrily sought after provisions, and I was lucky in finding a supply of biscuits and a canteen of excellent molasses, which gave great comfort to myself and friends. The plunder in the camp was abundant. There were bedding, clothing, and accouterments without stint; but people were so exhausted they could do no more than idly turn the things over. Night soon fell, and only a few stray shots could now be heard, to remind us of the thrilling and horrid din of the day, excepting the huge bombs from the gunboats, which, as we were not far from the blue-coats, discomfited only those in the rear. By eight o'clock, I was repeating my experiences in the region of dreams, indifferent to columbiads and mortars, and the torrential rain which, at midnight, increased the miseries of the wounded and tentless.

An hour before dawn, I awoke from a refreshing sleep; and, after a hearty replenishment of my vitals with biscuit and molasses, I conceived myself to be fresher than on Sunday morning. While awaiting daybreak, I gathered from other early risers their ideas in regard to the events of yesterday. They were under the impression that we had gained a great victory, though we had not, as we had anticipated, reached the Tennessee River.

TAKEN PRISONER AT SHILOH

Van Dorn, with his expected reinforcements for us, was not likely to make his appearance for many days yet; and, if General Buell, with his twenty thousand troops, had joined the enemy during the night, we had a bad day's work before us. We were short of provisions and ammunition, General Sidney Johnston, our chief commander, had been killed; but Beauregard was safe and unhurt, and, if Buell was absent, we would win the day.

At daylight, I fell in with my company, but there were only about fifty of the Dixies present. Almost immediately after, symptoms of the coming battle were manifest. Regiments were hurried into line, but, even to my inexperienced eyes, the troops were in ill-condition for repeating the efforts of Sunday. However, in brief time, in consequence of our pickets being driven in on us, we were moved forward in skirmishing order. With my musket on the trail I found myself in active motion, more active than otherwise I would have been, perhaps, because Captain Smith had said, "Now, Mr. Stanley, if you please, step briskly forward!" This singling-out of me wounded my *amour-propre*, and sent me forward like a rocket. In a short time we met our opponents in the same formation as ourselves, and advancing most resolutely. We threw ourselves behind such trees as were near us, fired, loaded, and darted forward to another shelter. Presently I found myself in an open, grassy space, with no convenient tree or stump near; but, seeing a shallow hollow some twenty paces ahead, I made a dash for it, and plied my musket with haste. I became so absorbed with some blue figures in front of me, that I did not pay sufficient heed to my companion grays; the open space was too dangerous, perhaps, for their ad-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

vance; for, had they emerged, I should have known they were pressing forward. Seeing my blues in about the same proportion, I assumed that the grays were keeping their position, and never once thought of retreat. However, as, despite our firing, the blues were coming uncomfortably near, I rose from my hollow; but, to my speechless amazement, I found myself a solitary gray, in a line of blue skirmishers! My companions had retreated! The next I heard was, "Down with that gun, Secesh, or I'll drill a hole through you! Drop it, quick!"

Half a dozen of the enemy were covering me at the same instant, and I dropped my weapon, incontinently. Two men sprang at my collar, and marched me, unresisting, into the ranks of the terrible Yankees. *I was a prisoner!*

A DRUMMER-BOY AT GETTYSBURG

[1863]

BY HARRY M. KIEFFER

“HARRY, I’m getting tired of this thing. It’s becoming monotonous, this thing of being roused every morning at four, with orders to pack up and be ready to march at a moment’s notice, and then lying around here all day in the sun. I don’t believe we are going anywhere, anyhow.”

We had been encamped for six weeks, of which I need give no special account, only saying that in those “summer quarters,” as they might be called, we went on with our endless drilling, and were baked and browned, and thoroughly hardened to the life of a soldier in the field.

The monotony of which Andy complained did not end that day, nor the next. For six successive days we were regularly roused at four o’clock in the morning, with orders to “pack up and be ready to move immediately!” only to unpack as regularly about the middle of the afternoon. We could hear our batteries pounding away in the direction of Fredericksburg, but we did not then know that we were being held well in hand till the enemy’s plan had developed itself into the great march into Pennsylvania, and we were let off in hot pursuit.

So, at last, on the 12th of June, 1863, we started, at five o’clock in the morning, in a northwesterly direction. My journal says: “Very warm, dust plenty, water

THE BOY'S BOOK OF BATTLES

scarce, marching very hard. Halted at dusk at an excellent spring, and lay down for the night with aching limbs and blistered feet."

I pass over the six days' continuous marching that followed, steadily on toward the north, pausing only to relate several incidents that happened by the way.

On the 14th we were racing with the enemy — we being pushed on to the utmost of human endurance — for the possession of the defenses of Washington. From five o'clock of that morning till three the following morning, — that is to say from daylight to daylight, — we were hurried along under a burning June sun, with no halt longer than sufficient to recruit our strength with a hasty cup of coffee at noon and nightfall. Nine, ten, eleven, twelve o'clock at night, and still on! It was almost more than flesh could endure. Men fell out of line in the darkness by the score, and tumbled over by the roadside, asleep almost before they touched the ground.

I remember how a great tall fellow in our company made us laugh along somewhere about one o'clock that morning, — "Pointer," we called him, — an excellent soldier, who afterward fell at his post at Spottsylvania. He had been trudging on in sullen silence for hours, when all of a sudden, coming to a halt, he brought his piece to "order arms" on the hard road with a ring, took off his cap, and, in language far more forcible than elegant, began forthwith to denounce both parties to the war, "from A to Izzard," in all branches of the service, civil and military, army and navy, artillery, infantry, and cavalry, and demanded that the enemy should come on in full force here and now, "and I'll fight them all,

A DRUMMER-BOY AT GETTYSBURG

single-handed and alone, the whole pack of 'em! I'm tired of this everlasting marching, and I want to fight!"

"Three cheers for Pointer!" cried some one, and we laughed heartily as we toiled doggedly on to Manassas, which we reached at 3 A.M., June 15. I can assure you, we lost no time in stretching ourselves at full length in the tall summer grass.

"James McFadden, report to the adjutant for camp guard! James McFadden! Anybody know where Jim McFadden is?"

Now that was rather hard, was n't it? To march from daylight to daylight, and lie down for a rest of probably two hours before starting again, and then to be called up to stand throughout those precious two hours on guard duty!

I knew very well where McFadden was, for was n't he lying right beside me in the grass? But just then I was in no humor to tell. The camp might well go without a guard that night, or the orderly might find McFadden in the dark if he could.

But the rules were strict, and the punishment was severe, and poor McFadden, bursting into tears of vexation, answered like a man: "Here I am, orderly; I'll go." It was hard.

Two weeks later, both McFadden and the orderly went where there is neither marching nor standing guard any more.

Now comes a long rest of a week, in the woods near the Potomac; for we have been marching parallel with the enemy, and dare not go too fast, lest, by some sudden and dexterous move in the game, he should sweep past our rear in upon the defenses of Washington. And after

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

this sweet refreshment, we cross the Potomac on pontoons, and march, perhaps with a lighter step, since we are nearing home, through the smiling fields and pleasant villages of "Maryland, my Maryland." At Poolesville, a little town on the north bank of the Potomac, we smile as we see a lot of children come trooping out of the village school, — a merry sight to men who have seen neither woman nor child these six months and more, and a touching sight to many a man in the ranks as he thinks of his little flaxen heads in the far-away home. Aye, think of them now, and think of them full tenderly, too, for many a man of you shall never have child climb on his knee any more!

As we enter one of those pleasant little Maryland villages, — Jefferson by name, — we find on the outskirts of the place two young ladies and two young gentlemen, waving the good old flag as we pass, and singing, "Rally round the Flag, Boys!" The excitement along the line is intense. Cheer on cheer is given, by regiment after regiment, as we pass along, we drummer-boys beating, at the colonel's express orders, the old tune, "The Girl I left behind me," as a sort of response. Soon we are in among the hills again, and still the cheering goes on in the far distance to the rear.

Only ten days later, we passed through the same village again, and were met by the same young ladies and gentlemen, waving the same flag and singing the same song. But though we tried twice, and tried hard, we could not cheer at all; for there's a difference between five hundred men and one hundred, — is there not? So, that second time, we drooped our tattered flags, and raised our caps in silent and sorrowful salute. Through Middle-

A DRUMMER-BOY AT GETTYSBURG

town next, where a rumor reaches us that the enemy's forces have occupied Harrisburg, and where certain ladies, standing on a balcony and waving their handkerchiefs as we pass by, in reply to our colonel's greeting, that "we are glad to see so many Union people here," answer, "Yes; and we are glad to see the Yankee soldiers, too."

From Middletown, at six o'clock in the evening, across the mountain to Frederick, on the outskirts of which city we camp for the night. At half-past five next morning (June 29) we are up and away, in a drizzling rain, through Lewistown and Mechanicstown, near which latter place we pass a company of Confederate prisoners, twenty-four in number, dressed in well-worn gray and butternut, which makes us think that the enemy cannot be far ahead. After a hard march of twenty-five miles, the greater part of the way over a turnpike, we reach Emmitsburg at nightfall, some of us quite barefoot, and all of us footsore and weary. Next morning (June 30) at nine o'clock we were up and away again, "on the road leading towards Gettysburg," they say. After crossing the line between Maryland and Pennsylvania, where the colonel halts the column for a moment, in order that we may give three rousing cheers for the "Old Keystone State," we march perceptibly slower, as if there were some impediment in the way. There is a feeling among the men that the enemy is somewhere near. Toward noon we leave the public road, and taking across the fields, form in line of battle along the rear of a wood, and pickets are thrown out. There is an air of uncertainty and suspicion in the ranks as we look to the woods, and consider what our pickets may possibly

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

unmask there. But no developments have yet been made when darkness comes, and we bivouac for the night behind a strong stone wall.

Passing down along the line of glowing fires, in the gathering gloom, I come on one of my company messes squatting about a fire, cooking supper. Joe Gutelius, corporal and color-guard from our company, is superintending the boiling of a piece of meat in a tin can, while Sam Ruhl and his brother Joe are smoking their pipes near by.

"Boys, it begins to look a little dubious, don't it? Where is Jimmy Lucas?"

"He's out on picket, in the woods yonder. Yes, Harry, it begins to look a little as if we were about to stir the Johnnies out of the brush," says Joe Gutelius, throwing another rail on the fire.

"If we do," says Joe Ruhl, "remember that you have the post of honor, Joe, and 'if any man pulls down that flag, shoot him on the spot!'"

"Never you fear for that," answers Joe Gutelius. "We of the color-guard will look out for the flag. For my part, I'll stay a dead man on the field before the colors of the 150th are disgraced."

"You'll have some tough tussling for your colors, then," says Sam. "If the 'Louisiana Tigers' get after you once, look out!"

"Who's afraid of the 'Louisiana Tigers'? I'll back the 'Bucktails' against the 'Tigers' any day. Stay and take supper with us, Harry! We are going to have a feast to-night. I have the heart of a beef boiling in the can yonder; and it is done now. Sit up, boys, get out your knives, and fall to."

A DRUMMER BOY AT GETTYSBURG

"We're going to have boiled lion heart for supper, Harry," says Joek Ruhl, with mock apology for the fare, "but we could n't catch any lions. They seem to be scarce in these parts. Maybe, we can catch a tiger, to-morrow, though."

Little do we think, as we sit thus cheerily talking about the blazing fire behind the stone wall, that it is our last supper together, and that ere another nightfall two of us will be sleeping in the silent bivouac of the dead.

"Colonel, close up your men, and move on as rapidly as possible."

It is the morning of July 1, and we are crossing a bridge over a stream, as the staff officer, having delivered this order for us, dashes down the line to hurry up the regiments in the rear. We get up on a high range of hills, from which we have a magnificent view. The day is bright, the air is fresh and sweet with the scent of the newmown hay, and the sun shines out of an almost cloudless sky, and as we gaze away off yonder down the valley to the left — look! Do you see that? A puff of smoke in midair! Very small, and miles away, as the faint and long-coming "boom" of the exploding shell indicates; but it means that something is going on yonder, away down in the valley, in which, perhaps, we may have a hand before the day is done. See! another — and another! Faint and far away comes the long-delayed "boom!" "boom!" echoing over the hills, as the staff officer dashes along the lines with orders to "double-quic^k! double-quic^k!"

Four miles of almost constant double-quic^king is no

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

light work at any time, least of all on such a day as this memorable 1st day of July, for it is hot and dusty. But we are in our own State now, boys, and the battle is opening ahead, and it is no time to save breath. On we go, now up a hill, now over a stream, now checking our headlong rush for a moment, for we *must* breathe a little. But the word comes along the line again, "double-quick," and we settle down to it with right good will, while the cannon ahead seem to be getting nearer and louder. There's little said in the ranks, for there is little breath for talking, though every man is busy enough thinking. We all feel, somehow, that our day has come at last — as indeed it has!

We get in through the outskirts of Gettysburg, tearing down fences of the town lots and outlying gardens as we go; we pass a battery of brass guns drawn up beside the Seminary, some hundred yards in front of which building, in a strip of meadow land, we halt, and rapidly form the line of battle.

"General, shall we unsling knapsacks?" shouts some one down the line to our division general, as he is dashing by.

"Never mind the knapsacks, boys; it's the State now!"

And he plunges his spurs into the flanks of his horse, as he takes the stake-and-rider fence at a leap, and is away.

"Unfurl the flags, color-guard!"

"Now, forward, double —"

"Colonel, we're not loaded yet!"

A laugh runs along the line as, at the command, "Load at will — load!" the ramrods make their merry music,

A DRUMMER BOY AT GETTYSBURG

and at once the word is given, "Forward, double-quick!" and the line sweeps up that rising ground with banners gayly flying, and cheers that rend the air,—a sight, once seen, never to be forgotten.

I suppose my readers wonder what a drummer-boy does in time of battle. Perhaps they have the same idea I used to have, namely, that it is the duty of a drummer-boy to beat his drum all the time the battle rages, to encourage the men or drown the groans of the wounded! But if they will reflect a moment, they will see that amid the confusion and noise of battle, there is little chance of martial music being either heard or heeded. Our colonel had long ago given us our orders,—

"You drummer-boys, in time of an engagement, are to lay aside your drums and take stretchers and help off the wounded. I expect you to do this, and you are to remember that, in doing it, you are just as much helping the battle on as if you were fighting with guns in your hands."

And so we sit down there on our drums and watch the line going in with cheers. Forthwith we get a smart shelling, for there is evidently somebody else watching that advancing line besides ourselves; but they have elevated their guns a little too much, so that every shell passes quite over the line and ploughs up the meadow sod about *us* in all directions.

Laying aside our knapsacks, we go to the Seminary, now rapidly filling with the wounded. This the enemy surely cannot know, or they would n't shell the building so hard! We get stretchers at the ambulances, and start out for the line of battle. We can just see our regimental colors waving in the orchard, near a log house about

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

three hundred yards ahead, and we start out for it — I on the lead, and Daney behind.

There is one of our batteries drawn up to our left a short distance as we run. It is engaged in a sharp artillery duel with one of the enemy's, which we cannot see, although we can hear it plainly enough, and straight between the two our road lies. So, up we go, Daney and I, at a lively trot, dodging the shells as best we can, till, panting for breath, we set down our stretcher under an apple tree in the orchard, in which, under the brow of the hill, we find the regiment lying, one or two companies being out on the skirmish line ahead.

I count six men of Company C lying yonder in the grass — killed, they say, by a single shell. Close beside them lies a tall, magnificently built man, whom I recognize by his uniform as belonging to the "Iron Brigade," and therefore probably an Iowa boy. He lies on his back at full length, with his musket beside him — calm-looking as if asleep, but having a fatal blue mark on his forehead and the ashen pallor of death on his countenance. Andy calls me away for a moment to look after some poor fellow whose arm is off at the shoulder; and it was just time I got away, too, for immediately a shell plunges into the sod where I had been sitting, tearing my stretcher to tatters, and ploughing up a great furrow under one of the boys who had been sitting immediately behind me, and who thinks, "That was rather close shaving, was n't it, now?" The bullets whistling overhead make pretty music with their ever-varying "z-i-p! z-i-p!" and we could imagine them so many bees, only they have such a terribly sharp sting. They tell me, too, of a certain cavalryman, Dennis Buckley, Sixth Michi-

A DRUMMER BOY AT GETTYSBURG

gan Cavalry, it was, as I afterwards learned — let history preserve the brave boy's name, who, having had his horse shot under him, and seeing that first-named shell explode in Company C with such disaster, exclaimed, "That is the company for me!" He remained with the regiment all day, doing good service with his carbine, and he escaped unhurt!

"Here they come, boys; we'll have to go in at them on a charge, I guess!" Creeping close around the corner of the log-house, I can see the long lines of gray sweeping up in fine style over the fields; but I feel the colonel's hand on my shoulder.

"Keep back, my boy; no use exposing yourself in that way."

As I get back behind the house and look around, an old man is seen approaching our line through the orchard in the rear. He is dressed in a long blue swallow-tailed coat and high silk hat, and coming up to the colonel, he asks, —

"Would you let an old chap like me have a chance to fight in your ranks, colonel?"

"Can you shoot?" inquires the colonel.

"Oh, yes, I can shoot, I reckon," says he.

"But where are your cartridges?"

"I've got 'em here, sir," says the old man, slapping his hand on his trousers pocket.

And so "old John Burns," of whom every schoolboy has heard, takes his place in the line, and loads and fires with the best of them, and is left wounded and insensible on the field when the day is done.

Reclining there under a tree while the skirmishing is going on in front, and the shells are tearing up the sod

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

around us, I observe how evidently hard-pressed is that battery yonder in the edge of the wood, about fifty yards to our right. The enemy's batteries have excellent range on the poor fellows serving it. And when the smoke lifts or rolls away, in great clouds, for a moment, we can see the men running, and ramming, and sighting, and firing, and swabbing, and changing position every few minutes, to throw the enemy's guns out of range a little. The men are becoming terribly few, but nevertheless their guns, with a rapidity that seems unabated, belch forth great clouds of smoke, and send the shells shrieking over the plain.

Meanwhile, events occur which give us something more to think of than mere skirmishing and shelling. Our beloved brigadier-general, Roy Stone, stepping out a moment to reconnoiter the enemy's position and movements, is seen by some sharpshooter off in a tree, and is carried, severely wounded, into the barn. Our colonel, Langhorne Wister, assumes command of the brigade. Our regiment, facing westward, while the line on our right faces to the north, is observed to be exposed to an enfilading fire from the enemy's guns, as well as from the long line of gray now appearing in full sight on our right. So our regiment must form in line and "change front forward," in order to come in line with the other regiments. Accomplished swiftly, this new movement brings our line at once face to face with the enemy's, which advances to within fifty yards, and exchanges a few volleys, but is soon checked and staggered by our fire.

Yet now, see! Away to our left, and consequently on our flank, a new line appears, rapidly advancing out of the woods a half mile away, and there must be some

A DRUMMER BOY AT GETTYSBURG

quick and sharp work done now, boys, or, between the old foes in front and the new ones on our flank, we shall be annihilated. To clear us of these old assailants in front before the new line can sweep down on our flank, our brave colonel, in a ringing command, orders a charge along the whole line. Then, before the gleaming and bristling bayonets of our "Bucktail" Brigade as it yells and cheers, sweeping resistlessly over the field, the enemy gives way, and flies in confusion. But there is little time to watch them fly, for that new line on our left is approaching at a rapid pace; and, with shells falling thick and fast into our ranks, and men dropping everywhere, our regiment must reverse the former movement by "changing front to rear," and so resume its original position, facing westward; for the enemy's new line is approaching from that direction, and if it takes us in flank we are done for.

To "change front to rear" is a difficult movement to execute even on drill, much more so under severe fire, but it is executed now, steadily and without confusion, yet not a minute too soon! For the new line of gray is upon us in a mad tempest of lead, supported by a cruel artillery fire, almost before our line can steady itself to receive the shock. However, partially protected by a post-and-rail fence, we answer fiercely, and with effect so terrific, that the enemy's line wavers, and at length moves off by the right flank, giving us a breathing space for a time.

During this struggle, there had been many an exciting scene all along the line, as it swayed backward and forward over the field,—scenes which we have had no time to mention yet.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

See yonder, where the colors of the regiment on our right — our sister regiment, the 149th — have been advanced a little, to draw the enemy's fire, while our line sweeps on to the charge. There ensues about the flags a wild *mêlée* and close hand-to-hand encounter. Some of the enemy have seized the colors and are making off with them in triumph, shouting victory. But a squad of our own regiment dashes out swiftly, led to the rescue of the stolen colors by Sergeant John C. Kensill, of Company F, who falls to the ground before reaching them, and amid yells and cheers and smoke you see the battle flags rise and fall, and sway hither and thither upon the surging mass, as if tossed on the billows of a tempest, until, wrenched away by strong arms, they are borne back in triumph to the line of the 149th.

See.yonder, again! Our colonel is clapping his hand to his cheek, from which a red stream is pouring; our lieutenant-colonel, Henry S. Huidekoper, is kneeling on the ground, and is having his handkerchief tied tight around his arm at the shoulder; Major Thomas Chamberlain and Adjutant Richard L. Ashurst both lie low, pierced with balls through the chest; one lieutenant is waving his sword to his men, although his leg is crushed at the knee; three other officers of the line are lying over there, motionless now forever. All over the field are strewn men, wounded or dead, and comrades pause a moment in the mad rush to catch the last words of the dying. Incidents such as these the reader must imagine for himself, to fill in these swift sketches of how the day was won — and lost!

Aye, lost! For the balls, which have so far come mainly from our front, begin now to sing in from our

A DRUMMER BOY AT GETTYSBURG

left and right, which means that we are being flanked. Somehow, away off to our right, a half-mile or so, our line has given way, and is already on retreat through the town, while our left is being driven in, and we ourselves may shortly be surrounded and crushed — and so the retreat is sounded.

Back now along the railroad cut we go, or through the orchard and the narrow strip of woods behind it, with our dead scattered around on all sides, and the wounded crying piteously for help.

“Harry! Harry!” It is a faint cry of a dying man yonder in the grass, and I *must* see who it is.

“Why, Willie! Tell me where you are hurt,” I ask, kneeling down beside him; and I see the words come hard, for he is fast dying.

“Here in my side, Harry. Tell — mother — mother —”

Poor fellow, he can say no more. His head falls back, and Willie is at rest forever!

On, now, through that strip of woods, at the other edge of which, with my back against a stout oak, I stop and look at a beautiful and thrilling sight. Some reserves are being brought up; infantry in the center, the colors flying and officers shouting; cavalry on the right, with sabers flashing and horses on a trot; artillery on the left, with guns at full gallop sweeping into position to check the headlong pursuit, — it is a grand sight, and a fine rally; but a vain one, for in an hour we are swept off the field, and are in full retreat through the town.

Up through the streets hurries the remnant of our shattered corps, while the enemy is pouring into the town only a few squares away from us. There is a tem-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

pest of shrieking shells and whistling balls about our ears. The guns of that battery by the woods we have dragged along, all the horses being disabled. The artillery men load as we go, double-charging with grape and canister.

"Make way there, men!" is the cry, and the surging mass crowds close up on the sidewalks to right and left, leaving a long lane down the center of the street, through which the grape and canister go rattling into the ranks of the enemy's advance guard.

And so, amid scenes which I have neither space nor power to describe, we gain Cemetery Ridge toward sunset, and throw ourselves down by the road in a tumult of excitement and grief, having lost the day through the overwhelming force of numbers, and yet somehow having gained it, too, although as yet we know it not, for the sacrifice of our corps has saved the position for the rest of the army, which has been marching all day, and which comes pouring in over Cemetery Ridge all night long.

Aye, the position is saved; but where is our corps? Well may our division general, Doubleday, who early in the day succeeded to the command, when our brave Reynolds had fallen, shed tears of grief as he sits there on his horse and looks over the shattered remains of that First Army Corps, for there is but a handful of it left. Of the five hundred and fifty men that marched under our regimental colors in the morning, but one hundred remain. All our field and staff officers are gone. Of some twenty captains and lieutenants, but one is left without a scratch, while of my own company only thirteen out of fifty-four sleep that night on Cemetery Ridge, under the open canopy of heaven. There is no

GETTYSBURG FIFTY YEARS AFTER



A DRUMMER BOY AT GETTYSBURG

roll call, for Sergeant Weidensaul will call the roll no more; nor will Joe Gutelius, nor Joe Ruhl, nor McFadden, nor Henning, nor many others of our comrades whom we miss, ever answer to their names again until the world's last great reveillé.

FARRAGUT

[Mobile Bay, August 5, 1864]

BY WILLIAM TUCKEY MEREDITH

FARRAGUT, Farragut,
Old Heart of Oak,
Daring Dave Farragut,
Thunderbolt stroke,
Watches the hoary mist
Lift from the bay,
Till his flag, glory-kissed,
Greets the young day.

Far, by gray Morgan's walls,
Looms the black fleet.
Hark, deck to rampart calls
With the drums' beat!
Buoy your chains overboard,
While the steam hums;
Men! to the battlement,
Farragut comes.

See, as the hurricane
Hurtles in wrath
Squadrons of clouds amain
Back from its path!
Back to the parapet,
To the guns' lips,

FARRAGUT

Thunderbolt Farragut
Hurls the black ships.

Now through the battle's roar
Clear the boy sings,
"By the mark fathoms four,"
While his lead swings.
Steady the wheelmen five
"Nor' by East keep her,"
"Steady," but two alive:
How the shells sweep her!

Lashed to the mast that sways
Over red decks,
Over the flame that plays
Round the torn wrecks,
Over the dying lips
Framed for a cheer,
Farragut leads his ships,
Guides the line clear.

On by heights cannon-browed,
While the spars quiver;
Onward still flames the cloud
Where the hulks shiver.
See, yon fort's star is set,
Storm and fire past.
Cheer him, lads, — Farragut,
Lashed to the mast!

Oh! while Atlantic's breast
Bears a white sail,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

While the Gulf's towering crest
Tops a green vale,
Men thy bold deeds shall tell,
Old Heart of Oak,
Daring Dave Farragut,
Thunderbolt stroke!

AN AUGUST MORNING WITH FARRAGUT



THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

AN EPISODE OF THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR

[1870]

BY ÉMILE ZOLA

It was nearly ten o'clock up on the Plateau de l'Algérie, and still the men of Beaudoin's company were resting supine, among the cabbages, in the field whence they had not budged since early morning. The cross fire from the batteries on Hattoy and the peninsula of Iges was hotter than ever; it had just killed two more of their number, and there were no orders for them to advance. Were they to stay there and be shelled all day, without a chance to see anything of the fighting?

They were even denied the relief of discharging their chasse-pots. Captain Beaudoin had at last put his foot down and stopped the firing, that senseless fusillade against the little wood in front of them, which seemed entirely deserted by the Prussians. The heat was stifling; it seemed to them that they should roast, stretched there on the ground under the blazing sky. . . .

Maurice's attention was attracted to the sick-bearers, whose movements he watched with interest as they searched for wounded men among the depressions of the ground. At the end of a sunken road, and protected by a low ridge not far from their position, a flying ambulance of first aid had been established, and its emissaries had begun to explore the plateau. A tent was quickly erected, while from the hospital van the attendants

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

extracted the necessary supplies; compresses, bandages, linen, and the few indispensable instruments required for the hasty dressings they gave before dispatching the patients to Sedan, which they did as rapidly as they could secure wagons, the supply of which was limited. There was an assistant surgeon in charge, with two subordinates of inferior rank under him. In all the army none showed more gallantry and received less acknowledgment than the litter-bearers. They could be seen all over the field in their gray uniforms, with the distinctive red badges on their caps and on their arms, courageously risking their lives and unhurriedly pushing forward through the thickest of the fire to the spots where men had been seen to fall. At times they would creep on hands and knees; would always take advantage of a hedge or ditch, or any shelter that was afforded by the conformation of the ground, never exposing themselves unnecessarily out of bravado. When at last they reached the fallen men their painful task commenced, which was made more difficult and protracted by the fact that many of the subjects had fainted, and it was hard to tell whether they were alive or dead. Some lay face downward with their mouths in a pool of blood, in danger of suffocating, others had bitten the ground until their throats were choked with dry earth, others, where a shell had fallen among a group, were a confused, intertwined heap of mangled limbs and crushed trunks. With infinite care and patience the bearers would go through the tangled mass, separating the living from the dead, arranging their limbs and raising their heads to give them air, cleansing their faces as well as they could with the means at their command. Each of them

THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

carried a bucket of cool water, which he had to use very sparingly. And Maurice could see them thus engaged, often for minutes at a time, kneeling by some man whom they were trying to resuscitate, waiting for him to show some sign of life.

He watched one of them, some fifty yards away to the left, working over the wound of a little soldier from the sleeve of whose tunic a thin stream of blood was trickling, drop by drop. The man of the red cross discovered the source of the hemorrhage and finally checked it by compressing the artery. In urgent cases, like that of the little soldier, they rendered these partial attentions, locating fractures, bandaging and immobilizing the limbs so as to reduce the danger of transportation. And the transportation, even, was an affair that called for a great deal of judgment and ingenuity; they assisted those who could walk, and carried others, either in their arms, like little children, or pickaback when the nature of the hurt allowed it; at other times they united in groups of two, three, or four, according to the requirements of the case, and made a chair by joining their hands, or carried the patient off by his legs and shoulders in a recumbent posture. In addition to the stretchers provided by the medical department there were all sorts of temporary makeshifts, such as the stretchers improvised from knapsack straps and a couple of muskets. And in every direction on the unsheltered, shell-swept plain they could be seen, singly or in groups, hastening with their dismal loads to the rear, their heads bowed and picking their steps, an admirable spectacle of prudent heroism.

Maurice saw a pair on his right, a thin, puny little

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

fellow lugging a burly sergeant, with both legs broken, suspended from his neck; the sight reminded the young man of an ant toiling under a burden many times larger than itself; and even as he watched them a shell burst directly in their path and they were lost to view. When the smoke cleared away the sergeant was seen lying on his back, having received no further injury, while the bearer lay beside him, disemboweled. And another came up, another toiling ant, who, when he had turned his dead comrade on his back and examined him, took the sergeant up and made off with his load. . . .

At last the two batteries of reserve artillery came up. Their arrival was an immense relief to the anxiously expectant men, as if the guns were to be a rampart of protection to them and at the same time demolish the hostile batteries that were thundering against them from every side. And then, too, it was in itself an exhilarating spectacle to see the magnificent order they preserved as they came dashing up, each gun followed by its caisson, the drivers seated on the near horse and holding the off horse by the bridle, the cannoneers bolt upright on the chests, the chiefs of detachment riding in their proper position on the flank. Distances were preserved as accurately as if they were on parade, and all the time they were tearing across the fields at headlong speed, with the roar and crash of a hurricane.

Maurice, who had lain down again, arose and said to Jean in great excitement:—

“Look! over there on the left, that is Honoré's battery. I can recognize the men.”

Jean gave him a back-handed blow that brought him down to his recumbent position.

THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

“Lie down, will you! and make believe dead!”

But they were both deeply interested in watching the maneuvers of the battery, and never once removed their eyes from it; it cheered their heart to witness the cool and intrepid activity of those men, who, they hoped, might yet bring victory to them.

The battery had wheeled into position on a bare summit to the left, where it brought up all standing; then, quick as a flash, the cannoneers leaped from the chests and unhooked the limbers, and the drivers, leaving the guns in position, drove fifteen yards to the rear, where they wheeled again so as to bring teams and limbers face to the enemy and there remained, motionless as statues. In less time than it takes to tell it the guns were in place, with the proper intervals between them, distributed into three sections of two guns each, each section commanded by a lieutenant—and over the whole a captain, a long maypole of a man, who made a terribly conspicuous landmark on the plateau. And this captain, having first made a brief calculation, was heard to shout:—

“Sight for sixteen hundred yards!”

Their fire was to be directed upon a Prussian battery, screened by some bushes, to the left of Fleigneux, the shells from which were rendering the position of the Calvary untenable.

“Honoré’s piece, you see,” Maurice began again, whose excitement was such that he could not keep still. “Honoré’s piece is in the center section. There he is now, bending over to speak to the gunner; you remember Louis, the gunner, don’t you?—the little fellow with whom we had a drink at Vouziers? And that fellow in

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

the rear, who sits so straight on his handsome chestnut, is Adolphe, the driver — ”

First came the gun with its chief and six cannoneers, then the limber with its four horses ridden by two men, beyond that the caisson with its six horses and three drivers, still farther to the rear were the *prolonge*, forge, and battery wagon; and this array of men, horses and material extended to the rear in a straight unbroken line of more than a hundred yards in length; to say nothing of the spare caisson and the men and beasts who were to fill the places of those removed by casualties, who were stationed at one side, as much as possible out of the enemy's line of fire.

And now Honoré was attending to the loading of his gun. The two men whose duty it was to fetch the cartridge and the projectile returned from the caisson, where the corporal and the artificer were stationed; two other cannoneers, standing at the muzzle of the piece, slipped into the bore the cartridge, a charge of powder in an envelope of serge, and gently drove it home with the rammer, then in like manner introduced the shell, the studs of which creaked faintly in the spirals of the rifling. When the primer was inserted in the vent and all was in readiness, Honoré thought he would like to point the gun himself for the first shot, and throwing himself in a semi-recumbent posture on the trail, working with one hand the screw that regulated the elevation, with the other he signaled continually to the gunner, who, standing behind him, moved the piece by imperceptible degrees to right or left with the assistance of the lever.

“That ought to be about right,” he said as he arose. The captain came up, and stooping until his long

THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

body was bent almost double, verified the elevation. At each gun stood the assistant gunner, waiting to pull the lanyard that should ignite the fulminate by means of a serrated wire. And the orders were given in succession, deliberately, by number: —

“Number one, Fire! Number two, Fire!”

Six reports were heard, the guns recoiled, and while they were brought back to position the chiefs of detachment observed the effect of the shots and found that the range was short. They made the necessary correction and the evolution was repeated, in exactly the same manner as before; and it was that cool precision, that mechanical routine of duty, without agitation and without haste, that did so much to maintain the morale of the men. They were a little family, united by the tie of a common occupation, grouped around the gun, which they loved and revered as if it had been a living thing; it was the object of all their care and attention, to it all else was subservient, men, horses, caisson, everything. Thence also arose the spirit of unity and cohesion that animated the battery at large, making all its members work together for the common glory and the common good, like a well-regulated household.

The 106th had cheered lustily at the completion of the first round; they were going to make those bloody Prussian guns shut their mouths at last! but their elation was succeeded by dismay when it was seen that the projectiles fell short, many of them bursting in the air and never reaching the bushes that served to mask the enemy’s artillery.

“Honoré,” Maurice continued, “says that all the other pieces are popguns and that his old girl is the only

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

one that is good for anything. Ah, his old girl! He talks as if she were his wife and there were not another like her in the world! Just notice how jealously he watches her and makes the men clean her off! I suppose he is afraid she will overheat herself and take cold!"

He continued rattling on in this pleasant vein to Jean, both of them cheered and encouraged by the cool bravery with which the artillerymen served their guns; but the Prussian batteries, after firing three rounds, had now got the range, which, too long at the beginning, they had at last ciphered down to such a fine point that their shells were landed invariably among the French pieces, while the latter, notwithstanding the efforts that were made to increase their range, still continued to place their projectiles short of the enemy's position. One of Honoré's cannoneers was killed while loading the piece; the others pushed the body out of their way, and the service went on with the same methodical precision, with neither more nor less haste. In the midst of the projectiles that fell and burst continually the same unvarying rhythmical movements went on uninterruptedly about the gun; the cartridge and shell were introduced, the gun was pointed, the lanyard pulled, the carriage brought back to place; and all with such undeviating regularity that the men might have been taken for automatons, devoid of sight and hearing.

What impressed Maurice, however, more than anything else, was the attitude of the drivers, sitting straight and stiff in their saddles fifteen yards to the rear, face to the enemy. There was Adolphe, the broad-chested, with his big blond mustache across his rubicund face; and who shall tell the amount of courage a

THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

man must have to enable him to sit without winking and watch the shells coming toward him, and he not allowed even to twirl his thumbs by way of diversion! The men who served the guns had something to occupy their minds, while the drivers, condemned to immobility, had death constantly before their eyes, and plenty of leisure to speculate on probabilities. They were made to face the battle-field because, had they turned their backs to it, the coward that so often lurks at the bottom of man's nature might have got the better of them and swept away man and beast. It is the unseen danger that makes dastards of us; that which we can see, we brave. The army has no more gallant set of men in its ranks than the drivers in their obscure position.

Another man had been killed, two horses of a caisson had been disemboweled, and the enemy kept up such a murderous fire that there was a prospect of the entire battery being knocked to pieces should they persist in holding that position longer. It was time to take some step to baffle that tremendous fire, notwithstanding the danger there was in moving, and the captain unhesitatingly gave orders to bring up the limbers.

The risky maneuver was executed with lightning speed; the drivers came up at a gallop, wheeled their limbers into position in rear of the guns, when the cannoneers raised the trails of the pieces and hooked on. The movement, however, collecting as it did, momentarily, men and horses on the battery front in something of a huddle, created a certain degree of confusion, of which the enemy took advantage by increasing the rapidity of their fire; three more men dropped. The teams darted away at breakneck speed, describing an arc of a circle

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

among the fields, and the battery took up its new position some fifty or sixty yards more to the right, on a gentle eminence that was situated on the other flank of the 106th. The pieces were unlimbered, the drivers resumed their stations at the rear, face to the enemy, and the firing was reopened; and so little time was lost between leaving their old post and taking up the new that the earth had barely ceased to tremble under the concussion.

Maurice uttered a cry of dismay, when, after three attempts, the Prussians had again got their range; the first shell landed squarely on Honoré's gun. The artilleryman rushed forward, and with a trembling hand felt to ascertain what damage had been done his pet; a great wedge had been chipped from the bronze muzzle. But it was not disabled, and the work went on as before, after they had removed from beneath the wheels the body of another cannoneer, with whose blood the entire carriage was besplashed.

"It was not little Louis; I am glad of that," said Maurice, continuing to think aloud. "There he is now, pointing his gun; he must be wounded, though, for he is only using his left arm. Ah, he is a brave lad, is little Louis; and how well he and Adolphe get on together, in spite of their little tiffs, only provided the gunner, the man who serves on foot, shows a proper amount of respect for the driver, the man who rides a horse, notwithstanding that the latter is by far the more ignorant of the two. Now that they are under fire, though, Louis is as good a man as Adolphe —"

Jean, who had been watching events in silence, gave utterance to a distressful cry: —

THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

"They will have to give it up! No troops in the world could stand such a fire."

Within the space of five minutes the second position had become as untenable as was the first; the projectiles kept falling with the same persistency, the same deadly precision. A shell dismounted a gun, fracturing the chase, killing a lieutenant and two men. Not one of the enemy's shots failed to reach, and at each discharge they secured a still greater accuracy of range, so that if the battery should remain there another five minutes they would not have a gun or a man left. The crushing fire threatened to wipe them all out of existence.

Again the captain's ringing voice was heard ordering up the limbers. The drivers dashed up at a gallop and wheeled their teams into place to allow the cannoneers to hook on the guns, but before Adolphe had time to get up Louis was struck by a fragment of shell that tore open his throat and broke his jaw; he fell across the trail of the carriage just as he was on the point of raising it. Adolphe was there instantly, and beholding his prostrate comrade weltering in his blood, jumped from his horse and was about to raise him to the saddle and bear him away. And at that moment, just as the battery was exposed flank to the enemy in the act of wheeling, offering a fair target, a crashing discharge came, and Adolphe reeled and fell to the ground, his chest crushed in, with arms wide extended. In his supreme convulsion he seized his comrade about the body, and thus they lay, locked in each other's arms in a last embrace, "married" even in death.

Notwithstanding the slaughtered horses and the confusion that that death-dealing discharge had caused

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

among the men, the battery had rattled up the slope of a hillock and taken post a few yards from the spot where Jean and Maurice were lying. For the third time the guns were unlimbered, the drivers retired to the rear and faced the enemy, and the cannoneers, with a gallantry that nothing could daunt, at once reopened fire.

"It is as if the end of all things were at hand!" said Maurice, the sound of whose voice was lost in the uproar.

It seemed indeed as if heaven and earth were confounded in that hideous din. Great rocks were cleft asunder, the sun was hid from sight at times in clouds of sulphurous vapor. When the cataclysm was at its height the horses stood with drooping heads, trembling, dazed with terror. The captain's tall form was everywhere upon the eminence; suddenly he was seen no more; a shell had cut him clean in two, and he sank, as a ship's mast that is snapped off at the base.

But it was about Honoré's gun, even more than the others, that the conflict raged, with cool efficiency and obstinate determination. The non-commissioned officer found it necessary to forget his chevrons for the time being and lend a hand in working the piece, for he had now but three cannoneers left; he pointed the gun and pulled the lanyard, while the others brought ammunition from the caisson, loaded, and handled the rammer and the sponge. He had sent for men and horses from the battery reserves that were kept to supply the places of those removed by casualties, but they were slow in coming, and in the mean time the survivors must do the work of the dead. It was a great discouragement to all

THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

that their projectiles ranged short and burst almost without exception in the air, inflicting no injury on the powerful batteries of the foe, the fire of which was so efficient. And suddenly Honoré let slip an oath that was heard above the thunder of the battle; ill-luck, ill-luck, nothing but ill-luck! the right wheel of his piece was smashed! *Tonnerre de Dieu!* what a state she was in, the poor darling! stretched on her side with a broken paw, her nose buried in the ground, crippled and good for nothing! The sight brought big tears to his eyes, he laid his trembling hand upon the breech, as if the ardor of his love might avail to warm his dear mistress back to life. And the best gun of them all, the only one that had been able to drop a few shells among the enemy! Then suddenly he conceived a daring project, nothing less than to repair the injury there and then, under that terrible fire. Assisted by one of his men he ran back to the caisson and secured the spare wheel that was attached to the rear axle, and then commenced the most dangerous operation that can be executed on a battle-field. Fortunately the extra men and horses that he had sent for came up just then, and he had two cannoneers to lend him a hand.

For the third time, however, the strength of the battery was so reduced as practically to disable it. To push their heroic daring further would be madness; the order was given to abandon the position definitely.

“Make haste, comrades!” Honoré exclaimed. “Even if she is fit for no further service we’ll carry her off; those fellows shan’t have her!”

To save the gun, even as men risk their lives to save the flag; that was his idea. And he had not ceased to

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

speak when he was stricken down as by a thunderbolt, his right arm torn from its socket, his left flank laid open. He had fallen upon his gun he loved so well, and lay there as if stretched on a bed of honor, with head erect, his unmutilated face turned toward the enemy, and bearing an expression of proud defiance that made him beautiful in death. From his torn jacket a letter had fallen to the ground and lay in the pool of blood that dribbled slowly from above.

The only lieutenant left alive shouted the order: —
“Bring up the limbers!”

A caisson had exploded with a roar that rent the skies. They were obliged to take the horses from another caisson in order to save the gun of which the team had been killed. And when, for the last time, the drivers had brought up their smoking horses and the guns had been limbered up, the whole battery flew away at a gallop and never stopped until they reached the edge of the wood of La Garenne, nearly twelve hundred yards away.

Maurice had seen the whole. He shivered with horror, and murmured mechanically, in a faint voice: —

“Oh! poor fellow, poor fellow!”

In addition to this feeling of mental distress he had a horrible sensation of physical suffering, as if something was gnawing at his vitals. It was the animal portion of his nature asserting itself; he was at the end of his endurance, was ready to sink with hunger. His perceptions were dimmed, he was not even conscious of the dangerous position the regiment was in now it was no longer protected by the battery. It was more than likely that the enemy would not long delay to attack the plateau in force.

THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

"Look here," he said to Jean, "I must eat — if I am to be killed for it the next minute, I must eat."

He opened his knapsack and, taking out the bread with shaking hands, set his teeth in it voraciously. The bullets were whistling above their heads, two shells exploded only a few yards away, but all was as naught to him in comparison with his craving hunger.

"Will you have some, Jean?"

The corporal was watching him with hungry eyes and a stupid expression on his face; his stomach was also twinging him.

"Yes, I don't care if I do; this suffering is more than I can stand."

They divided the loaf between them and each devoured his portion gluttonously, unmindful of what was going on about them so long as a crumb remained. And it was at that time that they saw their colonel for the last time, sitting his big horse, with his blood-stained boot. The regiment was surrounded on every side; already some of the companies had left the field. Then, unable longer to restrain their flight, with tears standing in his eyes and raising his sword above his head: —

"My children," cried M. de Vineuil, "I commend you to the protection of God, who thus far has spared us all!"

He rode off down the hill, surrounded by a swarm of fugitives, and vanished from their sight.

Then, they knew not how, Maurice and Jean found themselves once more behind the hedge, with the remnant of their company. Some forty men at the outside were all that remained, with Lieutenant Rochas as their commander, and the regimental standard was with

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

them; the subaltern who carried it had furled the silk about the staff in order to try to save it. They made their way along the hedge, as far as it extended, to a cluster of small trees upon a hillside, where Rochas made them halt and reopen fire. The men, dispersed in skirmishing order and sufficiently protected, could hold their ground, the more that an important cavalry movement was in preparation on their right and regiments of infantry were being brought up to support it.

It was at that moment that Maurice comprehended the full scope of that mighty, irresistible turning movement that was now drawing near completion. That morning he had watched the Prussians debouching by the Saint-Albert pass and had seen their advanced guard pushed forward, first to Saint-Menges, then to Fleigneux, and now, behind the wood of La Garenne, he could hear the thunder of the artillery of the Guard, could behold other German uniforms arriving on the scene over the hills of Givonne. Yet a few moments, it might be, and the circle would be complete; the Guard would join hands with the Fifth Corps, surrounding the French army with a living wall, girdling them about with a belt of flaming artillery. It was with the resolve to make one supreme, desperate effort, to try to hew a passage through that advancing wall, that General Margueritte's division of the reserve cavalry was massing behind a protecting crest preparatory to charging. They were about to charge into the jaws of death, with no possibility of achieving any useful result, solely for the glory of France and the French army. And Maurice, whose thoughts turned to Prosper, was a witness of the terrible spectacle.

THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

What between the messages that were given him to carry and their answers, Prosper had been kept busy since daybreak spurring up and down the plateau of Illy. The cavalrymen had been awakened at peep of dawn, man by man, without sound of trumpet, and to make their morning coffee had devised the ingenious expedient of screening their fire with a greatcoat so as not to attract the attention of the enemy. Then there came a period when they were left entirely to themselves, with nothing to occupy them; they seemed to be forgotten by their cannoneers. They could hear the sound of the cannonading, could descry the puffs of smoke, could see the distant movements of the infantry, but were utterly ignorant of the battle, its importance, and its results. Prosper, as far as he was concerned, was suffering from want of sleep. The cumulative fatigue induced by many nights of broken rest, the invincible somnolency caused by the easy gait of his mount, made life a burden. He dreamed dreams and saw visions; now he was sleeping comfortably in a bed between clean sheets; now snoring on the bare ground among sharpened flints. For minutes at a time he would actually be sound asleep in his saddle, a lifeless clod, his steed's intelligence answering for both. Under such circumstances comrades had often tumbled from their seats upon the road. They were so fagged that when they slept the trumpets no longer awakened them; the only way to rouse them from their lethargy and get them on their feet was to kick them soundly.

"But what are they going to do, what are they going to do with us?" Prosper kept saying to himself. It was the only thing he could think of to keep himself awake.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

For six hours the cannon had been thundering. As they climbed a hill two comrades, riding at his side, had been struck down by a shell, and as they rode onward seven or eight others had bit the dust, pierced by rifle-balls that came no one could say whence. It was becoming tiresome, that slow parade, as useless as it was dangerous, up and down the battle-field. At last — it was about one o'clock — he learned that it had been decided they were to be killed off in a somewhat more decent manner. Margueritte's entire division, comprising three regiments of chasseurs de France, and one of hussars, had been drawn in and posted in a shallow valley a little to the south of the Calvary of Illy. The trumpets had sounded: "Dismount!" and then the officers' command ran down the line to tighten girths and look to packs.

Prosper alighted, stretched his cramped limbs, and gave Zephyr a friendly pat upon the neck. Poor Zephyr! he felt the degradation of the ignominious, heart-breaking service they were subjected to almost as keenly as his master; and not only that, but he had to carry a small arsenal of stores and implements of various kinds; the holsters stuffed with his master's linen and underclothing and the greatcoat rolled above, the stable suit, blouse, and overalls, and the sack containing brushes, currycomb, and other articles of equine toilet behind the saddle, the haversack with rations slung at his side, to say nothing of such trifles as side-lines and picket-pins, the watering bucket and the wooden basin. The cavalryman's tender heart was stirred by a feeling of compassion, as he tightened up the girth and looked to see that everything was secure in its place.

THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

It was a trying moment. Prosper was no more a coward than the next man, but his mouth was intolerably dry and hot; he lit a cigarette in the hope that it would relieve the unpleasant sensation. When about to charge no man can assert with any degree of certainty that he will ride back again. The suspense lasted some five or six minutes; it was said that General Margueritte had ridden forward to reconnoiter the ground over which they were to charge; they were awaiting his return. The five regiments had been formed in three columns, each column having a depth of seven squadrons; enough to afford an ample meal to the hostile guns.

Presently the trumpets rang out: "To horse!" and this was succeeded almost immediately by the shrill summons: "Draw sabers!"

The colonel of each regiment had previously ridden out and taken his proper position, twenty-five yards to the front, the captains were all at their posts at the head of their squadrons. Then there was another period of anxious waiting, amid a silence heavy as that of death. Not a sound, not a breath, there, beneath the blazing sun, nothing, save the beating of those brave hearts. One order more, the supreme, the decisive one, and that mass, now so inert and motionless, would become a resistless tornado, sweeping all before it.

At that juncture, however, an officer appeared coming over the crest of the hill in front, wounded, and preserving his seat in the saddle only by the assistance of a man on either side. No one recognized him at first, but presently a deep, ominous murmur began to run from squadron to squadron, which quickly swelled into a furious uproar. It was General Margueritte, who had

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

received a wound from which he died a few days later; a musket-ball had passed through both cheeks, carrying away a portion of the tongue and palate. He was incapable of speech, but waved his arm in the direction of the enemy. The fury of his men knew no bounds; their cries rose louder still upon the air.

“It is our general! Avenge him, avenge him!”

Then the colonel of the first regiment, raising aloft his saber, shouted in a voice of thunder:—

“Charge!”

The trumpets sounded, the column broke into a trot and was away. Prosper was in the leading squadron, but almost at the extreme right of the right wing, a position of less danger than the center, upon which the enemy always naturally concentrate their hottest fire. When they had topped the summit of the Calvary and began to descend the slope beyond that led downward into the broad plain he had a distinct view, some two-thirds of a mile away, of the Prussian squares that were to be the object of their attack. Beside that vision all the rest was dim and confused before his eyes; he moved onward as one in a dream, with a strange ringing in his ears, a sensation of voidness in his mind that left him incapable of framing an idea. He was a part of the great engine that tore along, controlled by a superior will. The command ran along the line: “Keep touch of knees! Keep touch of knees!” in order to keep the men closed up and give their ranks the resistance and rigidity of a wall of granite; and as their trot became swifter and swifter and finally broke into a mad gallop, the chasseurs d’Afrique gave their wild Arab cry that excited their wiry steeds to the verge of frenzy. Onward they

THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

tore, faster and faster still, until their gallop was a race of unchained demons, their shouts the shrieks of souls in mortal agony; onward they plunged amid a storm of bullets that rattled on casque and breastplate, on buckle and scabbard, with a sound like hail; into the bosom of that hailstorm flashed that thunderbolt beneath which the earth shook and trembled, leaving behind it, as it passed, an odor of burned woolen and the exhalations of wild beasts.

At five hundred yards the line wavered an instant, then swirled and broke in a frightful eddy that brought Prosper to the ground. He clutched Zephyr by the mane and succeeded in recovering his seat. The center had given way, riddled, almost annihilated as it was by the musketry fire, while the two wings had wheeled and ridden back a little way to renew their formation. It was the foreseen, foredoomed destruction of the leading squadron. Disabled horses covered the ground, some quiet in death, but many struggling violently in their strong agony; and everywhere dismounted riders could be seen, running as fast as their short legs would let them, to capture other mounts for themselves. Many horses that had lost their masters came galloping back to the squadron and took their places in line of their own accord, to rush with their comrades back into the fire again, as if there was some strange attraction for them in the smell of gunpowder. The charge was resumed; the second squadron went forward, like the first, at a constantly accelerated rate of speed, the men bending upon their horses' necks, holding the sabers along the thighs, ready for use upon the enemy. Two hundred yards more were gained this time, amid the thunderous,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

deafening uproar, but again the center broke under the storm of bullets; men and horses went down in heaps, and the piled corpses made an insurmountable barrier for those who followed. Thus was the second squadron in its turn mown down, annihilated, leaving its task to be accomplished by those who came after.

When for the third time the men were called upon to charge and responded with invincible heroism, Prosper found that his companions were principally hussars and chasseurs de France. Regiments and squadrons, as organizations, had ceased to exist; their constituent elements were drops in the mighty wave that alternately broke and reared its crest again, to swallow up all that lay in its destructive path. He had long since lost distinctive consciousness of what was going on around him, and suffered his movements to be guided by his mount, faithful Zephyr, who had received a wound in the ear that seemed to madden him. He was now in the center, where all about him horses were rearing, pawing the air, and falling backward; men were dismounted as if torn from their saddles by the blast of a tornado, while others, shot through some vital part, retained their seats and rode onward in the ranks with vacant, sightless eyes. And looking back over the additional two hundred yards that this effort had won for them, they could see the field of yellow stubble strewn thick with dead and dying. Some there were who had fallen headlong from their saddles and buried their faces in the soft earth. Others had alighted on their backs, and were staring up into the sun with terror-stricken eyes that seemed bursting from their sockets. There was a handsome black horse, an officer's charger, that had been disem-

THE FIGHT BEFORE SEDAN

bowed, and was making frantic efforts to rise, his fore feet entangled in his entrails. Beneath the fire, that became constantly more murderous as they drew nearer, the survivors in the wings wheeled their horses and fell back to concentrate their strength for a fresh onset.

Finally it was the fourth squadron, which, on the fourth attempt, reached the Prussian lines. Prosper made play with his saber, hacking away at helmets and dark uniforms as well as he could distinguish them, for all was dim before him, as in a dense mist. Blood flowed in torrents; Zephyr's mouth was smeared with it, and to account for it he said to himself that the good horse must have been using his teeth on the Prussians. The clamor around him became so great that he could not hear his own voice, although his throat seemed splitting from the yells that issued from it. But behind the first Prussian line there was another, and then another, and then another still. Their gallant efforts went for nothing; those dense masses of men were like a tangled jungle that closed around the horses and riders who entered it and buried them in its rank growths. They might hew down those who were within reach of their sabers; others stood ready to take their places, the last squadrons were lost and swallowed up in their vast numbers. The firing, at point-blank range, was so furious that the men's clothing was ignited. Nothing could stand before it, all went down; and the work that it left unfinished was completed by bayonet and musket butt. Of the brave men who rode into action that day two-thirds remained upon the battle-field, and the sole end achieved by that mad charge was to add another glorious page to history. And then Zephyr, struck by a musket-ball

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

full in the chest, dropped in a heap, crushing beneath him Prosper's right thigh; and the pain was so acute that the young man fainted.

Maurice and Jean, who had watched the gallant effort with burning interest, uttered an exclamation of rage.

"Tonnere de Dieu! what bravery wasted!"

And they resumed their firing from among the trees of the low hill where they were deployed in skirmishing order. Rochas himself had picked up an abandoned musket and was blazing away with the rest. But the plateau of Illy was lost to them by this time beyond hope of recovery; the Prussians were pouring in upon it from every quarter. It was somewhere in the neighborhood of two o'clock, and their great movement was accomplished; the Fifth Corps and the Guards had effected their junction, the investment of the French army was complete.

GERMAN WOUNDED IN THE GALLERY OF
MIRRORS, VERSAILLES



THE INDIAN STORY OF CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT

[1877]

BY JAMES McLAUGHLIN

IN the first place Mrs. Spotted Horn Bull was there — which is more than can be said for some of the other ladies and gentlemen who have told of the events of that dreadful day when Custer led his gallant fellows into the jaws of death and worse. She was not then carried on the rolls of the Indian Department as Mrs. Spotted Horn Bull. A more imaginative sponsor than the Indian Agent had given her the more euphonious and, let us hope, more correctly descriptive appellation of Pte-San-Waste-Win. Twenty-eight years ago, when she first came to the agency at Standing Rock, when Spotted Horn Bull, who was killed with Sitting Bull, was still in the land of the living Dakotas, she was a strikingly good-looking Indian woman, and much esteemed by her neighbors for her intelligence and capacity. She had also the gift of eloquence, rare in an Indian woman, and a fluency in language and readiness of gesture which placed her high in the esteem of her story-loving tribesmen.

And many a big man among the Sioux had been content to hold his peace when Pte-San-Waste-Win raised her voice. Not that the voice was raucous or that Beautiful White Cow (the English rendition of her name) was a scold. I have heard a story that she on one

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

occasion man-handled a big chief of the Sioux Nation who she learned had maligned her, and that the man-handling followed his remark: "Woman, be silent; you have the mouth of a white man." And knowing Mrs. Spotted Horn Bull as I do, I have never doubted the verity of the incident so far as her attack was concerned.

She is now a sturdy, upstanding woman of sixty to sixty-five years of age, born of the Hunkpapa Sioux, a band that has provided the nation with many of its noted men. She was handsome, according to the Indian canons of taste, in her youth, and indeed I am not sure that the Indian taste in these matters might not well be accepted by some more advanced peoples. She was married in early youth to Spotted Horn Bull, a chief of his band and a man of prominence as a warrior and adviser, but no orator. She appears to have brought to the family the attributes in which her husband was lacking, for she sat in council of her tribe — and I know of no other Indian woman of her nation who was so significantly honored. Her voice was always listened to, for, in addition to her gift of eloquence, she was a clear thinker, and could make effective the ideas of her silent husband. Since she became a widow, and the Sioux no longer hold councils, her neighbors seek her advice in business matters. She has steadfastly refused to accept Christianity, though she has listened to all the arguments that have been made to her. She elects to cling to the beliefs of her fathers — a fact that does not at all detract from the esteem in which the missionaries hold her.

A few months ago I met Mrs. Spotted Horn Bull by

INDIAN STORY OF CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT

appointment at my son Harry's trading store, located at Oak Creek, on the Standing Rock Reservation. She had come in fifteen miles from her home on the Missouri River, near the mouth of Oak Creek, for the meeting. I was accompanied by a friend, and she greeted us with the effusive welcome of her people — as different as possible in its warmth and volubility from the greeting one not acquainted intimately with the Sioux might expect. She was a striking figure as she stood up to greet us.

This historian and poetess of the Sioux wore the ordinary costume of a woman of her people, but her gingham dress was of the Campbell plaid, her shawl-blanket of native make, her moccasins, neat, her jetty hair falling in two braids on each side of a smiling and expressive countenance. She looked a much younger woman than she really was — and by way of demonstrating that she still felt young, she danced a few steps, laughingly declaring that she had met and danced with many prominent people. It was after a substantial supper, to which Mrs. Spotted Horn Bull did full justice, that we sat down in my son's little parlor and listened to her story of the affair on the Little Big Horn.

I have always deplored the fact that English writers have never been able to render in their native elegance and appositeness the similes used by Indian orators and story-tellers. I now deplore the lack of that same capacity in myself. Mrs. Spotted Horn Bull exhausted the stores of her flowery vocabulary in the relation we listened to. She talked with great fluency, her voice pitched to a sort of breathless stage of excited feeling. I remember hearing a young woman declaim the Chorus

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

in "Henry V," put on by an American actor-manager a few years ago; the Sioux story-teller reminded me of the actress. She illustrated her every sentence in pantomime, and when she feared that she had not pictured the scene her memory brought up, she seized a pencil and paper and drew a sketch of the valley of the Little Big Horn, showing the location of the Indian village on the west bank, the distribution of the bands of the Sioux, the points of attack by Custer and Reno, and the fatal hill, now marked by a monument, where Custer fell. This sketch she used constantly to explain her meaning, and she was perfectly frank about the occurrences of June 25, 1876, except on one point. She ignored all questions as to the whereabouts of Sitting Bull during the fight. Skillfully avoiding the interrogation, or totally ignoring it, she made many excursions into Sioux history of that time; but Sitting Bull, her kinsman, who skulked in the hills while his people were carrying out the annihilation of the troops, she would not speak of. Once, exasperated by the questions of the third party to the hearing, she asked if he was a lawyer, and, being assured that he was not, she shook hands with him very solemnly and continued her relation. And this is the tale she told:—

"My brother, White Eyebrows, had been to a dance. All through the night he had been making glad the hearts of the maidens, for my brother was good to look upon and the women of the Hunkpapa know a good man. All the night he had danced with the other young people. It was not a war dance, but just a merrymaking of the younger people. A few days previous, our men had fought with the Crows and Shoshones [General

INDIAN STORY OF CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT

Crook's allies] and the enemies of my people had fallen as leaves when they turn yellow. We were not harmed, and there was no mourning in the village of the Sioux on the plateau beside the Greasy Grass, the river that the white men call the Little Big Horn. When my brother came to my tepee from the dance, I still slept. Late the night before I and the other women of the Hunkpapa had labored to make ready for the march that we were to take up that morning. Where we were going, I know not. Where the men of the Sioux go, there go the women; it is their duty and their pleasure. Our people were roaming through the country that had been given them before the coming of the whites. The country was good; there was rich grass for the ponies, and sweet water; the fields glowed with prairie flowers of yellow and red and blue; there were buffaloes in the valleys and Indian turnips on the hills for the digging. We were rich in provisions, and no man had a right to put out his hand and tell us that we should not roam. The village by the Greasy Grass was but the stopping-place for a day or two, and we had no thought of a fight with the white man. The Crows and Shoshones we had no fears of, for the lodges of the Sioux were many and their men brave as the lion of the mountains. But we were to move out to the northwest, and I had made many bundles of my store. Thus it was that I lay sleeping when my brother came to the tepee in the dawn and asked for food.

"I unpacked some of the bundles and prepared his breakfast, buffalo meat stewed with turnips, and set it before him; and as he ate, the people of the village awakened and the sun rose higher. I have said that our lodges

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

were many, but how many people there were, I know not. [There were about ten thousand Indians, including women and children, in the village.] But the women were all at work, and the ponies were being rounded up and preparations for leaving went on, that we might be away before the heat of the day became great, as it sometimes is in the country of my people and in the valleys near the big hills.

"The village was made along the Greasy Grass and between that river and the Big Horn, which flows north to the Yellowstone. The Blackfeet, who were not many, had the place at the south end of the village; next to the Blackfeet and closer to the river were my people, the Hunkpapa; down the river and next to the Hunkpapa were the Minniconjou; and below them the Sans Arc. Behind the Hunkpapa, away from the river, where the Ogallala and the Brule; and below the Minniconjou to the north were the Cheyennes. Up the river from the village of the Blackfeet there was thick timber, and through this we could not see.

"I have seen my people prepare for battle many times, and this I know: that the Sioux that morning had no thought of fighting. We expected no attack, and our young men did not watch for the coming of Long Hair [Custer] and his soldiers.

"Most of the women were occupied in packing their stores preparatory to breaking camp, and some of them were working along the bank of the river. On the east side of the river an old man had shot a buffalo that morning, and near where the buffalo lay dead some women and children were digging Indian turnips. These people first saw the soldiers, who then were far to the

INDIAN STORY OF CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT

east. They were on the little hills between the Greasy Grass and the Rosebud Rivers. They were six to eight miles distant when first seen, and some of the younger people hurried in from the place where the buffalo was killed to notify the camp. We could see the flashing of their sabers and saw that there were very many soldiers in the party. My people went on with their work, making ready to move across the Big Horn, but the tepees were not yet down. The men of the Sioux were much excited, and they watched the coming of Long Hair and hurried the women. The village was not made for a fight and they would move on. We had seen the soldiers marching along the high ridge on the east side of the river and were watching them, but had not seen these others approaching."

Mrs. Spotted Horn Bull halted in her story, and thought for a few moments. Then she struck her hands sharply together to imitate the rattling of carbine fire and continued:—

"Like that the soldiers were upon us. Through the tepee poles their bullets rattled. The sun was several hours high and the tepees were empty. Bullets coming from a strip of timber on the west bank of the Greasy Grass passed through the tepees of the Blackfeet and Hunkpapa. The broken character of the country across the river, together with the fringe of trees on the west side, where our camp was situated, had hidden the advance of a great number of soldiers, which we had not seen until they were close upon us and shooting into our end of the village, where, from seeing the direction taken by the soldiers we were watching, we felt comparatively secure.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

"The women and children cried, fearing they would be killed, but the men, the Hunkpapa and Blackfeet, the Ogallala and Minniconjou, mounted their horses and raced to the Blackfeet tepees. We could still see the soldiers of Long Hair marching along in the distance, and our men, taken by surprise, and from a point whence they had not expected to be attacked, went singing the song of battle into the fight behind the Blackfeet village. And we women wailed over the children, for we believed that the Great Father had sent all his men for the destruction of the Sioux. Some of the women put loads on the travois and would have left, but that their husbands and sons were in the fight. Others tore their hair and wept for the fate that they thought was to be the portion of the Sioux, through the anger of the Great Father, but the men were not afraid, and they had many guns and cartridges. Like the fire that, driven by a great wind, sweeps through the heavy grass-land where the buffalo range, the men of the Hunkpapa, the Blackfeet, the Ogallala, and the Minniconjou rushed through the village and into the trees, where the soldiers of the white chief had stopped to fire. The soldiers [Reno's] had been sent by Long Hair to surprise the village of my people. Silently had they moved off around the hills, and keeping out of sight of the young men of our people, had crept in, south of what men now call Reno Hill; they had crossed the Greasy Grass and climbed the bench from the bank. The way from the river to the plateau upon which our tepees stood was level, but the soldiers were on foot when they came in sight of the Blackfeet. Then it was that they fired and warned us of their approach."

INDIAN STORY OF CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT

Mrs. Spotted Horn Bull stopped an instant, and then said:—

"If the soldiers had not fired until all of them were ready for the attack; if they had brought their horses and rode into the camp of the Sioux, the power of the Dakota nation might have been broken, and our young men killed in the surprise, for they were watching Long Hair only and had no thought of an attack anywhere while they could see his soldiers traveling along parallel with the river on the opposite side, and more than a rifle-shot back from the river. Long Hair had planned cunningly that Reno should attack in the rear while he rode down and gave battle from the front of the village looking on the river. But the Great Spirit was watching over his red children. He allowed the white chief [Reno] to strike too soon, and the braves of the Sioux ran over his soldiers and beat them down as corn before the hail. They fought a few minutes, and the men of the Hunk-papa, the Blackfeet, Ogallala, and the Minniconjou bore them down and slew many of them — all who did not get across the river were killed. And Long Hair was still three miles away when nearly all of the blue coats that came to kill the Sioux, at our end of the village, were dead; only those escaped who were mounted on horses and got across the river. Those who crossed the river got on a high hill to the east, where our young men did not attack them further until after Custer and his men were killed. Twoscore of the bluecoats lay dead on the field, and our people took their guns and many cartridges, and the mourning was in the houses afar off where the women of the white braves waited to hear of the victory they expected their young men to win.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

"The shadow of the sun had not moved the width of a tepee pole's length from the beginning to the ending of the first fight; and while it was going on, the old man who had shot the buffalo east of the river, and some of the women and children who had been digging Indian turnips, and were cut off by the approach of Reno's men, came to the camp. They had seen the soldiers of Long Hair, and had heard the firing of Reno's men, and had secreted themselves in the timber along the river until the guns no longer spoke.

"Down the Greasy Grass River, three or four miles from where Reno's men had crossed the river, and over across from the camps of the Cheyennes and the Sans Arc, there is an easy crossing of the Greasy Grass. The crossing is near a butte, and around the butte there runs a deep ravine. From Long Hair's movements the Sioux warriors knew that he had planned to strike the camp of my people from the lower end as Reno struck it from the upper end. Even the women, who knew nothing of warfare, saw that Reno had struck too early, and the warriors who were generals in planning, even as Long Hair was, knew that the white chief would attempt to carry out his plan of the attack, believing that Reno had beaten our young men. There was wild disorder in our camp, the old women and children shrieked and got in the way of the warriors, and the women were ordered back out of the village, so that they might not be in the way of our soldiers. And our men went singing down the river, confident that the enemy would be defeated, even as we believed that all of Reno's men had been killed. And I wept with the women for the brave dead and exulted that our braves should gain a great

INDIAN STORY OF CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT

victory over the whites led by Long Hair, who was the greatest of their chiefs, and whose soldiers could then be plainly seen across the river. From a hill behind the camp, at first, and then from the bank of the river, I watched the men of our people plan to overthrow the soldiers of the Great Father; and before a shot was fired, I knew that no man who rode with Long Hair would go back to tell the tale of the fight that would begin when the soldiers approached the river at the lower end of the village."

The story-teller paused and was then asked the question: "Where was Sitting Bull during the fight?" She went on as though she had not heard the question.

"From across the river I could hear the music of the bugle and could see the column of soldiers turn to the left, to march down to the river to where the attack was to be made. All I could see was the warriors of my people. They rushed like the wind through the village, going down the ravine as the women went out to the grazing-ground to round up the ponies. It was done very quickly. There had been no council the night before — there was no need for one; nor had there been a scalpdance: nothing but the merrymaking of the young men and the maidens. When we did not know there was to be a fight, we could not be prepared for it. And our camp was not pitched anticipating a battle. The warriors would not have picked out such a place for a fight with white men, open to attack from both ends and from the west side. No; what was done that day was done while the sun stood still and the white men were delivered into the hands of the Sioux. But no plan was necessary.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

"Our chiefs and the young men rode quickly down to the end of the village, opposite to the hill upon which there now stands the great stone put up by the whites where Long Hair fell. Between that hill and the soldiers was a ravine which started from the river opposite the camp of the Sans Arc, and ran all the way across the butte. To get to the butte Long Hair must cross the ravine; but from where he was marching with his soldiers, he could not see into the ravine nor down to the banks of the river. The warriors of my people, of all the bands, the Sans Arc, the Cheyenne, the Brule, the Minniconjou, the Ogallala, the Blackfeet, all had joined with the Hunkpapa on our side of the Greasy Grass and opposite the opening into the ravine. Soon I saw a number of Cheyennes ride into the river, then some young men of my band, then others, until there were hundreds of warriors in the river and running up into the ravine. When some hundreds had passed the river and gone into the ravine, the others who were left, still a very great number, moved back from the river and waited for the attack. And I knew that the fighting men of the Sioux, many hundreds in number, were hidden in the ravine behind the hill upon which Long Hair was marching, and he would be attacked from both sides. And my heart was sad for the soldiers of Long Hair, though they sought the lives of our men; but I was a woman of the Sioux, and my husband, my uncles, and cousins, and brothers, all taking part in the battle, were men who could fight and plan, and I was satisfied.

"Pizi [Gall] and many of his young men had recrossed the Greasy Grass River after the white men had been

INDIAN STORY OF CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT

driven off or killed in the earlier engagement at the upper end of the village, where he with some of our warriors had been shooting at the soldiers, who were chased to the hill, and the soldiers had been shooting at them, but could not hit the Sioux. When Pizi [Gall] recrossed the river many women followed his party, and we heard him tell his men to frighten the horses of the soldiers, which were held in small bunches. With shoutings that we could hear across the river, the young men stampeded the horses and the women captured them and brought them to the village. The Indians fought the soldiers with bullets taken from the first party that attacked their village, and many rode the horses captured from the white men, who had fled to the hill. To the northwest a great many women and children were driving in the ponies of the Sioux, but I remained with many other women along the bank of Greasy Grass River. I saw Crazy Horse lead the Cheyennes into the water and up the ravine; Crow King and the Hunkpapa went after them; and then Gall, who had led his young men and killed the soldiers he had been fighting farther up the river, rode along the beach by the river to where Long Hair had stopped with his men.

"I cannot remember the time. When men fight and the air is filled with bullets, when the screaming of horses that are shot drowns the war-whoop of the warriors, a woman whose husband and brothers are in the battle does not think of the time. But the sun was no longer overhead when the war-whoop of the Sioux sounded from the river-bottom and the ravine surrounding the hill at the end of the ridge where Long Hair had taken his last stand. The river was in sight

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

from the butte, and while the whoop still rung in our ears and the women were shrieking, two Cheyennes tried to cross the river and one of them was shot and killed by Long Hair's men. Then the men of the Sioux Nation, led by Crow King, Hump, Crazy Horse, and many great chiefs, rose up on all sides of the hill, and the last we could see from our side of the river was a great number of gray horses. The smoke of the shooting and the dust of the horses shut out the hill, and the soldiers fired many shots, but the Sioux shot straight and the soldiers fell dead. The women crossed the river after the men of our village, and when we came to the hill there were no soldiers living and Long Hair lay dead among the rest. There were more than two hundred dead soldiers on the hill, and the boys of the village shot many who were already dead, for the blood of the people was hot and their hearts bad, and they took no prisoners that day."

The woman sat playing with the edge of her blanket. Of the dreadful things that took place on the hill after the command of the unfortunate Custer had been annihilated, she would, of course, say nothing. The women of her nation finished the work of the warriors on that awful field.

I asked her if there was any more fighting.

"Not much. The men on the hill [Reno's] were safe to stay there until they wanted water. Gall kept his men along the river. Some of the soldiers were shot as they tried to reach the water. There was some fighting, too, but none of our young men were killed.

"That night the Sioux, men, women, and children, lighted many fires and danced; their hearts were glad,

INDIAN STORY OF CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT

for the Great Spirit had given them a great victory. All along the valley of the Greasy Grass, fires were lighted, and the women laughed as they labored hard to bring in the fuel; for in the darkness they could see the gleam of the flames on the arms of the soldiers fastened in a trap on Reno Hill. The people had taken many guns, cartridges, horses, and much clothing from the soldiers, and they rejoiced, while the fires lit up the field on the hill across the river, where the naked bodies of the soldiers lay. We had much money, but did not know at the time what its real value was, and a lot of green-paper money was kept in my tepee for some time before being disposed of. All night the people danced and sang their songs of victory, and they were strong in their might and would have attacked the soldiers who lay through the night on what you call Reno Hill, but Gall and Crow King and Crazy Horse would waste no lives of the Sioux braves. They said: 'We will shoot at them occasionally, but not charge. They will fall into our hands when the thirst burns in their throats and makes them mad for drink.'

"This was the counsel of the chiefs, and the young men saw that it was good; so while many feasted, a few held the hill and the soldiers did not know it, for, of those who stole to the river to drink, none went back alive. There was fighting the next day, but the Sioux knew early in the day that many soldiers were coming up from the north, and preparations were made to leave for new hunting-grounds. And while our hearts were singing for the victory our braves had won, there were wailing women in the village, for they had their dead. Since the Sioux first fought the men who are our friends

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

now, they had not won so great a battle and at so little cost. Twenty-two dead were counted, and the price was not great; but what wife, or mother, or sister gives thought to victory when she finds her dead on the field? So it was that in the midst of the rejoicing, there was sorrowing among the women, who would not be comforted in knowing that their dead had gone to join the ghosts of the brave. The dead we took with us, laid on travois, and carried for many days, for among the white men were Crow and Shoshone scouts, who would desecrate our dead, and we would have no Sioux scalps dangling at their tepee-poles.

"So we went out from Greasy Grass River, and left Long Hair and his dead to their friends. The people scattered and the pursuit did not harm us. But I still remember the bitterness of the suffering of the Sioux that winter, after we had met and talked with Bear Coat [General Miles] on the Yellowstone, when we were on our way north into the land of the Red Coats, where we remained five winters, and were frequently very destitute, while we remained there.

"So it was that the Sioux defeated Long Hair and his soldiers in the valley of the Greasy Grass River, which my people remember with regret, but without shame. We are now living happily and in friendship with the whites, knowing that their hearts are good toward us. The great chiefs who led that fight are dead: Gall, Crow King, Crazy Horse, Big Road, and the other head men are dead and gone to the land of ghosts, but their deeds live, and we of the Sioux nation keep them in our memories, even as we keep in remembrance Long Hair and his men, whose bravery in battle makes the bravery

INDIAN STORY OF CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT

of their conquerors a thing that cannot be buried in the grave nor forgotten, because their ghosts are at peace."

And Mrs. Spotted Horn Bull put the corner of her shawl to her face and wiped away a tear, forced perhaps by the thought that the husband of her youth, whom she has not forgotten, — though she has had many offers from chief men of her people, — was with the ghosts of those others who fought with and against him on that June day, thirty-three years ago, in the valley of the Little Big Horn.

A MODERN BATTLEFIELD

[About 1898]

BY JULIAN RALPH

THE pictures of our battles which are produced in illustrated papers are not at all like real scenes at the front.

Art cannot keep pace with the quick advances of science, and illustrators find that for effect they must still put as much smoke and confusion in their battle studies as went with the old pictures of Waterloo. If this were left out, the public would be disappointed, and unable to tell a battlefield from a parade.

Lately a picture in one of our leading papers, by a very capable artist, showed the British storming a Boer position. In the middle distance was a Boer battery, and the only gunner left alive was standing up with a bandage round his head, while smoke and flame and flying fragments of shells filled the air in his vicinity. In the rush of the instant he must have been bandaged by the same shot that struck him, and as for the smoke and flying débris, there was more of this in a corner of that picture than was to be seen in all the four battles we have fought !

What, then, is a modern battle — how does it look and sound?

Really, the field of operations is so extensive, and the range of modern guns is so great, that fighting conditions have altered, until there is no longer any general “noise of battle hurtled in the air,” no possibility of

A MODERN BATTLEFIELD

grasping or viewing an engagement from any single point.

You may hear one of our big guns loosed three miles over on the right and another two miles on the left. If you are near they make a tremendous noise, yet I have not heard any explosion so loud as a good strong clap of thunder. The guns of the enemy cough far in front of you, and their shells burst within your lines with a louder sound—but with no real crash or deafening roar.

Our guns at their muzzles create but little smoke, though our Lyddite shells throw up clouds of dust and smoke where they fall miles away. Because the Boers are using old-fashioned powder in their cannon there is a small white cloud wherever one is fired, and a spurt of red sand where their shells dig into the veldt. The smoke of war, therefore, and the so-called roar of battle are nowadays occasional, scattered, inconsiderable.

Rifle-firing has been the principal feature of our fights. It sounds like the frying of fat, or like the crackling and snapping of green wood in a bonfire. If you are within two miles of the front, you are apt to be under fire, and then you hear the music of individual bullets. Their song is like the magnified note of a mosquito. “*Z—z—z—z—z*” — they go over your head; “*z—z—z—z—p*” — they finish as they bury themselves in the ground. This is a sound only to be heard when the bullets fly very close. You pick up your heels and run a hundred, or even fifty, yards, and you hear nothing but the general crackle of rifle-fire in and before the trenches.

The “putt-putt,” or Vickers-Nordenfeldt gun, is able to interest you at a distance of three miles. Its explo-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

sions are best described by the nickname given to the gun by one regiment: "The blooming door-knocker." Its bullets or shells are as big as the bowl of a large briar-root pipe, and they tear and slit the air with a terrible sound, exploding when they strike. The firing of this gun was heard all over the largest of our battlefields, and the sound of exploding shells carried far, because they were apt to fall on the quiet, outer edge of the field. The whizz that even these missiles make in flying, however, is like the whispered answers of a maid in love, only to be heard by the favored individual who is especially addressed.

Thus the many separate sounds are not loud enough to blend. The crowning, all-pervading noises are those of the guns and of the rifle-fire, and on the vast veldt, spread over a double line of five to seven miles in length, only those that are very near are very loud.

The scene of battle — the general view — is exceedingly orderly. There may be a desperate scrimmage where a company or two are storming a Kopje, but level your glass on yonder hill, and what do you see — a fringe of tiny jets of fire from the top where the Boers are, and our men in Khaki rising, and reclining, and occasionally firing, as they win their way upward.

The general view displays an arrangement as methodical as a chessboard. There are several battalions flat on their faces in two or three long lines. Over here is a battery in perfect order, with its limber of horses at rest near by. Another battery, equally well arranged, as if to have its photograph taken, is to be seen in the middle field; a third is on the farther side. The cavalry is sweeping across the veldt in perfect rank and alignment.

A MODERN BATTLEFIELD

There is no confusion anywhere — nothing is helter-skelter or slap-dash.

I remember only two momentary disturbances of this stern, steady discipline. One was in the afternoon, during the Modder River fight, when a large band of mounted Boers made a flank movement on our extreme right, and fired a volley at our immense mass of transport and ambulance wagons, water-carts, and ammunition trains.

The drivers were taken by surprise, and fell to lashing their mule teams and horses, generally to the accompaniment of high-keyed Kafir yells. The rout lasted but five minutes or less, and was comical beyond description, because the leading mules climbed over the wheelers, and the faster the bullets fell the louder the Kafirs yelled, and the more they plied their enormous whips.

The bravery of our stretcher-bearers is as much beyond question as it is beyond praise. All historians who tell of the dash and valor of the generals, colonels, majors, captains, and "Tommies" of the army, in common justice must also describe how the chaplains, doctors, and stretcher-bearers went in and out of the most hellish fire, not once or twice, but all through every battle.

It is just outside the range of fire that you see and realize the horrors of war. It is there that the wounded crawl and stagger by you; it is there that they spend their final output of energy, and fall down to lie until assistance comes; it is there that you see stretchers laden with their mangled freight, and sound soldiers bearing the wounded on their backs and in their arms.

More certainly to know the brutality and woe of war, happen upon a kopje that has just been stormed, or a

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

trench that has been carried. Go to such a place to-day, twenty centuries after Christ came with his message of peace on earth and good will to men, and behold what you shall see.

"Here," said I to a photographer in such a place — I think it was Belmont — "snap this scene. Look at the wounded all over the ground. Quick! out with your camera."

"Oh, I can't," said he; "it's too horrible!"

"As you please," I said. "But it's what the public wants."

You read, in the writings of those who know nothing of war, about the writhing of the wounded, and the groaning on the battlefield. There is no writhing, and the groans are few and faint. There was one man who was simply cut to pieces by a shell at Maaghersfontein, and his sufferings must have been awful. He kept crying, "Doctor, can't you do anything?" Another begged to be killed, and the first wounded man I saw kept saying, poor fellow, in ever so low a voice, "Oh, dear, dear, dear! Oh, dear, dear, dear!" But there is much less groaning than you would imagine — very little in proportion to the sufferings.

Two things are so common with the wounded as to be almost like rules of behavior. They all beg for water (it used to be cigarettes that they asked for on the Turkish side in the last war in Europe), and they seem always to be made gentle by their wounds. Men of the roughest speech, profane by second nature, cease to offend when stricken down.

"Well, mate," said one, whose leg was shattered, "you never know when your turn will come, do you?"

A MODERN BATTLEFIELD

And another simply cried, "Oh, dear!"

Now and then you heard, "For God's sake, get me taken to an ambulance!" — but no profanity was intended there.

Many may wonder how it feels to be wounded. All who had bones shattered by expanding bullets used nearly the same language to describe the sensation.

"You feel," they said, "exactly as if you had received a powerful shock from an electric battery, and then comes a blow as if your foot" (or arm, or whatever part it might be) "was crushed by a stroke with a tremendous mallet." It is much the same in a lesser degree if a bone is struck by a Mauser bullet; but if the smooth, slender, clean little shot merely pierces the flesh, a burning or stinging sensation is the instantaneous result.

"Lying six hours in the broiling sun was pretty bad," said one whose arm-bone was smashed; "but the really awful experience was the jolting over rocks when I was carried off in an ambulance."

Another man, an officer, whose foot was smashed by an explosive bullet, said, "Look at my pipe. That's what I did to keep from saying anything." He had bitten off an inch of the hardened rubber mouthpiece. That was before his wound was dressed. The relief that is given by the dressing of a wound must be exquisite, for you hear next to no groans or moans after a doctor has given this first attention.

In the army of Lord Methuen the great majority of wounds were in the arms and feet; but other points and experiences in war are more remarkable. The chances of receiving a wound seem not to have greatly increased with the improvements in modern death-dealing im-

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

plements. There were more than a million shots fired at Modder River, and yet only about eight hundred men were hit; while the number of bullets that hit water-bottles, haversacks, ration-tins, and coat-sleeves was astonishing. The damage to life and limb by the excessive artillery fire was next to nothing.

On a typical field of battle the armies oppose one another with orderly masses. Staff officers ride hither and thither. Batteries rumble to and fro at long intervals, as they are ordered to take new positions, and in the same way the cavalry appear and reappear on the edges of the field. Stretcher-bearers bring the wounded out of the zone of danger, and ambulances roll up, get their loads, and roll away again, all day continually as in a ceaseless train.

Brave privates bring out the wounded, and work their way back into fire again, now running forward, now dropping flat upon the veldt. Skulkers work back to the edge of the field in the same way — a few only — and are gathered up and sent forward in batches by the officers who come upon them. At last the cheer of British victory is heard, and the whole force rushes forward, or darkness falls upon an unfinished fight, and we grope about the veldt, seeking our camps, and the food and drink that most of us have gone without too long.

FIGHTING IN DARKEST AFRICA

BY GUSTAV FRENSEN

[THIS story is from a book supposed to be written by a soldier of the German army in Southwest Africa, telling of his experiences in the campaign against the natives in 1903-04.

The Editor.]

BEFORE midnight we advanced toward the enemy. It was said that our division would come upon them about morning. The Witt-boys rode on ahead as spies. Then came our company. One part was detached to ride at the side of the road in the bush; the other part was to keep on riding in the road. I was in the third platoon. Behind me in compact array came the artillery. We marched as quietly as possible, but still there were all sorts of noises: snorting of horses, jolting of wheels, an impatient, angry shout, or a blow with a whip. I was very cold in the saddle, and, in order not to have stiff fingers later, when I had to shoot, I laid the reins over my cartridge-belt and put my hands in my pockets.

At last morning broke, and delicate, rosy stripes of light soon shot up toward the zenith. The colors grew rapidly deeper, brighter, and stronger. The red was glorious in its fullness and the blue beautiful in its purity. The light mounted and extended itself, ascending like a new world a thousand times more beautiful than the old one. Then came the sun, big and clear, looking like a great, placid, wide-open eye. Although like a good soldier I had all my thoughts fixed on what was before me, on the enemy, and the bad hours I should probably meet with, yet I saw the splendor of the sky.

Near me rode a fellow from Hamburg, a fresh, quiet

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

boy. He said once to me: "You see, one has to have experienced something, or how shall one become a serious, capable man? That's why I came here." He was to enter his father's business later. He was riding just as I was, his reins over his cartridge-belt and his hands in his pockets; he was frowning this morning, and kept a sharp lookout before him. Diagonally behind me rode the former officer.

About this time of day, according to the predictions of our scouts, we ought to reach the enemy, but they were not to be seen. Then I thought, as did many others, that again there would be no fighting, and I was annoyed. Shortly after this, however, we heard the thunder of cannon coming from our right.

It got to be eight o'clock, and nine. The bush was so dense that the parties sent into it could not advance. They came out and marched together along the road. The sun was steadily mounting; it was getting to be a hot day. It began to be warm riding, and the horses were growing tired. A little thin lieutenant with a drawn face and sharp eyes rode up alongside of me and said, in a suppressed voice: "We are n't a mile and a half from the water-holes." Several times in the last few days he had made dangerous excursions into this region, and he knew every bush.

Then the first shot fell ahead. With a quick swing we were out of our saddles and had thrown the reins over our horses' necks. Those who were to hold the horses seized them. Our company was only ninety strong, and, as we left ten with the horses, only eighty men went into the thick bush. The enemy were firing vigorously and letting out short, wild cries. I saw one of our men

FIGHTING IN DARKEST AFRICA

wounded. He stooped and examined a wound in his leg. Still, I saw nothing of the enemy. Then just for a second I saw a piece of an arm in a grayish brown cord coat, and I shot at it. Then I lay down to spy out another target. Lively firing was being exchanged. When one of us thought he had hit his mark, he would announce it with a loud voice: "That one won't get up again! I got him in the middle of the breast!" The third man at my right, who was lying by a bush in front of me, twitched convulsively. A derisive voice on the other side shouted: "Had enough, Dutchman?" My comrade said, in a quiet voice: "I have a bullet in my shoulder," and he crawled back on all fours.

I could hear through all our own shooting that we were getting fired upon from the left. This fire now became heavier. They were coming nearer. In close ranks they came, creeping and shouting and screaming. Two of my neighbors were not shouting any more. We crawled back once or twice our length. The enemy shouted: "Look out, Dutchman, look out!" and laughed wildly. Others shouted: "Hurrah! hurrah!" The bush was swarming with men. I thought they would now break loose upon us in a wild storm and that it would be all up with us. On account of our wounded men I was fearfully anxious lest we should have to retreat. I was firmly resolved if the command should come, to shout loudly: "Take along the wounded!" But when I had just decided on this plan, a subordinate officer came up with several men and cheered us on with the words, "Hold your position! I am sending aid!" Soon afterwards I heard something slipping and grating behind me, and a quiet, soft voice said: "Move a little to the side."

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

The nozzle of a machine gun was pushed forward near my face, and immediately began to crackle away. The grape shot hissed furiously into the bushes, rattling and whizzing. How good it sounded! How surely and quietly I shot! "Did I hit? Did you see? Shoot, man, there! there!" Cannon, too, upon a slope behind us were now thundering over our heads. Then it grew a little more quiet on the other side, and the command of "Forward, double quick!" reached us. We sprang up and plunged forward, but a horrible volley of grape shot was poured against us and threw us back again.

In front of me an under officer had got a ball in the body, and blood was streaming from the wound. He was crouching and trying to stem the flow of blood with a handkerchief, and was calling for help. He was a light-complexioned, fine-looking man. Just then the former officer, the one who was under the official ban, came up from the side, seized the wounded man by the shoulders, and dragged him back, while balls were falling around him and the barrel of his gun was hit so that it flew rattling to one side. He then quietly lay down in his place again. On the other side, in the bush, they were shouting in wild zeal and shrieking for very rage.

We did not advance. I don't know how long we lay there firing. It was probably hours. I wondered once why no officer was to be seen with us, and I forgot it again. Sweat ran like water over my entire body. Not merely my tongue, but my throat, my whole body, cried out for a swallow of cool water. At one side a hospital aid was trying to bind a rubber bandage around the bleeding leg of a wounded man who begged him in South

FIGHTING IN DARKEST AFRICA

German dialect: "Take me back a little, can you?" Then the aid dragged him back panting.

The fire from the other side was getting weaker. A voice commanded us: "Fire more slowly." From the other side we heard it jeeringly mimicked: "Fire more slowly." A wounded man cried aloud for water.

We lay and waited, our guns pointed. Word passed from mouth to mouth: "The captain is dead; the first lieutenant, too — all the officers — and almost all the under officers." Dropping my gun in position, I took my field flask with my left hand and swallowed the little draught I had saved up for the greatest emergency. As I set the flask aside, I thought that perhaps it would be my last drink, and I thought of my parents. I believed that the enemy would get breath and then make another assault.

But that did not happen. A lieutenant who belonged to the staff came stooping along our ranks. When he was behind me, he knelt there, touched my boot lightly, and said: "Go to the general and report that according to my reckoning we are about half a mile distant from the last water-holes."

I got cautiously up on my knees, and then ducking down ran back to the road. Near an ant-hill, which was certainly three yards high, a surgeon and a hospital aid were endeavoring to save a man from bleeding to death; but I believe they came too late, for he lay like dead on his dark red blanket. Then I saw the balloon not far in front of me and I ran across the clearing to it.

The long rows of oxen, standing in harness in front of their wagons, raised their open mouths and bellowed hoarsely, for they scented the water-holes and panted

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

for water. The soldiers at the wagons and horses called to me with dry voices: "Get ahead, you fellows up forward! Are we coming to water soon? Are we going on?" They looked at me with deep, dry eyes. Those who held the horses had a great deal of trouble with the thirsty creatures, which were standing crowded together, swarmed over and tortured by insects. The sun scorched down. A thick, horribly dry, dust-filled air lay over the whole camp.

The surgeons in white cloaks stood in front of the hospital wagon around a table on which some one was lying. I wondered how many were lying in the shade of the wagon; five or six of them were dead, among them our captain. A wounded officer, I think it was a lieutenant, was giving water with his well hand to the severely wounded; his other arm was bleeding badly.

At the general's wagon a man was standing by the heliograph. The general was near by with officers and orderlies around him, all of them on foot. I reported and heard some one say: "The animals can't hold out any longer and the men are simply dying of thirst." The next moment, just as I had turned to run to the front, there came from behind from two or three directions wild shouting and volleys from the bush.

The outposts, who were lying and kneeling on the ground all around, moved in immediately. The voice of an officer rang out sharp and clear: "Disperse and charge in knots." I ran, and saw as I ran that a hailstorm of bullets was riddling the hospital wagon, that the doctors were seizing their guns, and that one of them was wounded. I even heard one say: "We'll take off our white cloaks, though." Then I lay down by a bush and

FIGHTING IN DARKEST AFRICA

shot at the enemy, who with wild shouts continued their onset through the bushes. Secretaries, orderlies, drivers, guard, and officers all rushed forward, lay down near one another, and protected their skins. The artillery turned while firing and shot away over us. Excited by my run and the sudden attack, I began a violent, rapid fire. A voice near me said: "Shoot more calmly." I did fire more calmly, thinking, "Who said that?" and as I seized my cartridge-belt and looked to the side, there lay the general two men from me, shooting coolly as becomes an old soldier. The enemy were pressing on in close ranks through the bush, shouting and firing. But we lay quietly and shot well. Then it got more quiet. The officers stood up and returned to the center of the camp again. Immediately after that came the order that the whole camp should advance two hundred yards. In running by I saw them lifting the dead and wounded into wagons. Then I ran forward again to my place in the line of defense.

Now as I lay there I felt how very parched I was. Begging and complaining and teasing for water went through the ranks. From behind we heard the hoarse lowing of the thirsty oxen. I believe that at this time, four in the afternoon, there was not a drop of water in the whole camp except for the wounded.

Then everything was moved to the front, — soldiers, artillery, and machine guns. A terrific fire rattled against the enemy, who were growing weary. Then word passed from man to man: "We are going to charge." Now the battle-cry told. I shall never forget it. With fierce yells, with distorted faces, with dry and burning eyes, we sprang to our feet and hurled ourselves forward.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

The enemy leaped, fired, and dispersed with loud outcries. We ran without interference, shouting, cursing, and shooting, to the good-sized clearing where the ardently desired water-holes were, and across it to the farther edge, where the bush began again.

The entire camp — the heavy wagons with their long teams of oxen; the hundreds of horses; the hospital wagons with the surgeons, the dead and the wounded; the headquarters, everything — followed in a rush and encamped in the clearing. But we lay around it at the edge of the bush to keep back the enemy, who now here and now there would break through the thick bushes in wild, loudly shouting parties. Behind us our men were now climbing down with army kettles into the water-holes, which were ten yards deep, and were filling buckets let down on reins and were beginning to water man and beast. When about ten animals had had a little, the hole was empty. There were about ten or twelve holes at this place.

The sun went down. Some of us slipped out, cut brush with our side-arms, and made a stockade in front of us. The artillerymen set up the cannon and machine guns behind us and knelt near them. Some of the soldiers were detailed to creep from man to man and give each a little water. In the camp further back of us, the restlessly crowding animals were being watered in the dark. By the hospital wagons nurses were going about, lanterns in their hands, bending over each patient. Meanwhile the enemy kept up their firing, which continually flashed out of the dark bush all around the camp. Not until about midnight did it become more quiet. We passed a little zwieback from hand to hand. Then com-

FIGHTING IN DARKEST AFRICA

plete darkness settled upon us and the shooting at last ceased.

What plan had the enemy in mind? Here we lay in the dark night, four hundred men, worn out, and half dead with thirst; and in front of us and all around us a savage, furious people numbering sixty thousand. We knew and heard nothing of the other German divisions. Perhaps they had been slaughtered and the sixty thousand were now collecting themselves to fall upon us. Through the quiet night we heard in the distance the lowing of enormous herds of thirsty cattle and a dull confused sound like the movement of a whole people. To the east there was a gigantic glow of fire. I lay stretched at full length with my gun ready, and cheered my utterly exhausted comrades to keep awake.

Thus morning gradually came on. Then some scouts went out cautiously and we learned to our great amazement that the enemy had withdrawn, and indeed in wild flight. We should have liked to follow them up, but we had no news yet from the other divisions. Moreover, both men and beasts had reached the limit of their strength. So we rested on that day, ate a little poor food, and cleansed and repaired our guns and other equipment; for we looked like people who had battered and bruised and soiled themselves in an attack of frenzy. The madness still showed in our frowning brows and in our eyes. Our dead lay in the midst of us in the shade of a tree.

We had a great deal of trouble to keep our animals from dying. We could not give them anywhere near enough water to satisfy them, and we could not give them any fodder at all, because the entire region had been eaten as bare by the enemy's cattle as if rats and

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

mice had gnawed it clean. The men and the animals had even grubbed into the earth in search of roots. It was a miserable day. The sun glared down, and an odor of old manure filled the whole land to suffocation.

At noon there came at last some news from the other divisions. Two reported that they had beaten the enemy, the third that it had saved itself with great difficulty and distress. The enemy had fled to the east with their whole enormous mass,— women, children, and herds.

Toward evening we buried our dead under the tree.

THE ATTACK UPON PORT ARTHUR

BY LIEUTENANT TADAYOSHI SAKURAI, OF THE IMPERIAL
JAPANESE ARMY

As soon as we were gathered together the colonel rose and gave us a final word of exhortation, saying: "This battle is our great chance of serving our country. Tonight we must strike at the vitals of Port Arthur. Our brave assaulting column must be not simply a forlorn-hope ('resolved-to-die'), but a 'sure-death' detachment. I as your father am more grateful than I can express for your gallant fighting. Do your best, all of you."

Yes, we were all ready for death when leaving Japan. Men going to battle of course cannot expect to come back alive. But in this particular battle to be ready for death was not enough; what was required of us was a determination not to fail to die. Indeed, we were "sure-death" men, and this new appellation gave us a great stimulus. Also a telegram that had come from the Minister of War in Tokyo, was read by the aide-de-camp, which said, "I pray for your success." This increased the exaltation of our spirits.

Let me now recount the sublimity and horror of this general assault. I was a mere lieutenant and everything passed through my mind as in a dream, so my story must be something like picking out things from the dark. I can't give you any systematic account, but must limit myself to fragmentary recollections. If this story sounds like a vainglorious account of my own

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

achievements, it is not because I am conscious of my merit when I have so little to boast of, but because the things concerning me and near me are what I can tell you with authority. If this partial account prove a clue from which the whole story of this terrible assault may be inferred, my work will not have been in vain.

The men of the "sure-death" detachment rose to their part. Fearlessly they stepped forward to the place of death. They went over Panlung-shan and made their way through the piled-up bodies of the dead, groups of five or six soldiers reaching the barricaded slope one after another.

I said to the colonel, "Good-bye, then!"

With this farewell I started, and my first step was on the head of a corpse. Our objective points were the Northern Fortress and Wang-tai Hill.

There was a fight with bombs at the enemy's skirmish-trenches. The bombs sent from our side exploded finely, and the place became at once a conflagration, boards were flung about, sand-bags burst, heads flew around, legs were torn off. The flames mingled with the smoke, lighted up our faces weirdly, with a red glare, and all at once the battle-line became confused. Then the enemy, thinking it hopeless, left the place and began to flee. "Forward! forward! Now is the time to go forward! Forward! Pursue! Capture it with one bound!" And, proud of our victory, we went forward courageously.

Captain Kawakami, raising his sword, cried, "Forward!" and then I, standing close by him, cried, "Sakurai's company, forward!"

Thus shouting I left the captain's side, and, in order

THE ATTACK UPON PORT ARTHUR

to see the road we were to follow, went behind the rampart. What is that black object which obstructs our view? It is the ramparts of the Northern Fortress. Looking back, I did not see a soldier. Alack, had the line been cut? In trepidation, keeping my body to the left for safety, I called the Twelfth Company.

“Lieutenant Sakurai!” a voice called out repeatedly in answer. Returning in the direction of the sound, I found Corporal Ito weeping loudly.

“What are you crying for? What has happened?”

The corporal, weeping bitterly, gripped my arm tightly.

“Lieutenant Sakurai, you have become an important person.”

“What is there to weep about? I say, what is the matter?”

He whispered in my ear, “Our captain is dead.”

Hearing this, I too wept. Was it not only a moment ago that he had given the order “Forward”? Was it not even now that I had separated from him? And yet our captain was one of the dead. In one moment our tender, pitying Captain Kawakami and I had become beings of two separate worlds. Was it a dream or a reality, I wondered?

Corporal Ito pointed out the captain’s body, which had fallen inside the rampart only a few rods away. I hastened thither and raised him in my arms.

“Captain!” I could not say a word more.

But as matters could not remain thus, I took the secret map which the captain had, and, rising up boldly, called out, “From henceforward I command the Twelfth Company.” And I ordered that some one of

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

the wounded should carry back the captain's corpse. A wounded soldier was just about to raise it up when he was struck on a vital spot and died leaning on the captain. One after another of the soldiers who took his place was struck and fell.

I called Sub-Lieutenant Ninomiya and asked him if the sections were together.

He answered in the affirmative. I ordered Corporal Ito not to let the line be cut, and told him that I would be in the center of the skirmishers. In the darkness of the night we could not distinguish the features of the country, nor in which direction we were to march. Standing up abruptly against the dark sky were the Northern Fortress and Wang-tai Hill. In front of us lay a natural stronghold, and we were in a caldron-shaped hollow. But still we marched on side by side.

"The Twelfth Company forward!"

I turned to the right and went forward as in a dream. I remember nothing clearly of the time.

"Keep the line together!"

This was my one command. Presently I ceased to hear the voice of Corporal Ito, who had been at my right hand. The bayonets gleaming in the darkness became fewer. The black masses of soldiers who had pushed their way on now became a handful. All at once, as if struck by a club, I fell down sprawling on the ground. I was wounded, struck in my right hand. The splendid magnesium light of the enemy flashed out, showing the piled-up bodies of the dead, and I raised my wounded hand and looked at it. It was broken at the wrist; the hand hung down and was bleeding profusely. I took out the already loosened bundle of band-

THE ATTACK UPON PORT ARTHUR

ages,¹ tied up my wound with the triangular piece, and then wrapping a handkerchief over it, I slung it from my neck with the sunrise flag, which I had sworn to plant on the enemy's fortress.

Looking up, I saw that only a valley lay between me and Wang-tai Hill, which almost touched the sky. I wished to drink and sought at my waist, but the canteen was gone; its leather strap alone was entangled in my feet. The voices of the soldiers were lessening one by one. In contrast, the glare of the rockets of the hated enemy and the frightful noise of the cannonading increased. I slowly rubbed my legs, and, seeing that they were unhurt, I again rose. Throwing aside the sheath of my sword, I carried the bare blade in my left hand as a staff, went down the slope as in a dream, and climbed Wang-tai Hill.

The long and enormously heavy guns were towering before me, and how few of my men were left alive now! I shouted and told the survivors to follow me, but few answered my call. When I thought that the other detachments must also have been reduced to a similar condition, my heart began to fail me. No reinforcement was to be hoped for, so I ordered a soldier to climb the rampart and plant the sun flag overhead, but alas! he was shot and killed, without even a sound or cry.

All of a sudden a stupendous sound as from another world rose around about me.

“Counter-assault!”

A detachment of the enemy appeared on the rampart, looking like a dark wooden barricade. They surrounded

¹ The “first aid” bandages, prepared by the Red Cross Society, issued to every soldier as part of his equipment.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

us in the twinkling of an eye and raised a cry of triumph. Our disadvantageous position would not allow us to offer any resistance, and our party was too small to fight them. We had to fall back down the steep hill. Looking back, I saw the Russians shooting at us as they pursued. When we reached the earthworks before mentioned, we made a stand and faced the enemy. Great confusion and infernal butchery followed. Bayonets clashed against bayonets; the enemy brought out machine-guns and poured shot upon us pell-mell; the men on both sides fell like grass. But I cannot give you a detailed account of the scene, because I was then in a dazed condition. I only remember that I was brandishing my sword in fury. I also felt myself occasionally cutting down the enemy. I remember a confused fight of white blade against white blade, the rain and hail of shell, a desperate fight here and a confused scuffle there. At last I grew so hoarse that I could not shout any more. Suddenly my sword broke with a clash, my left arm was pierced. I fell, and before I could rise a shell came and shattered my right leg. I gathered all my strength and tried to stand up, but I felt as if I were crumbling and fell to the ground perfectly powerless. A soldier who saw me fall cried, "Lieutenant Sakurai, let us die together."

I embraced him with my left arm and, gnashing my teeth with regret and sorrow, I could only watch the hand-to-hand fight going on about me. My mind worked like that of a madman, but my body would not move an inch.

THE SIEGE OF ADRIANOPLJE

[1912]

BY PHILIP GIBBS

[IN February, 1912, Bulgaria, Servia, Greece, and Montenegro formed an alliance for the purpose of wresting from Turkey her European territory. War began in October. The Turks, fatally handicapped by the inefficiency and disorganization of their commissariat, were steadily driven back by the invading armies, and Scutari and Adrianople, their most important cities in Europe, were besieged.

The Editor.]

So the siege went on, tedious and interminable, and as often as possible I went out to the hills, dodging the vigilant officers, who had a quick eye for the red *brassard* of a correspondent, and riding or walking as far as possible from the main road until I had reached the last hill which looked down upon the city.

From afar the turrets and roofs and domes and minarets of Adrianople appeared like a mirage through a haze of sunshine and a thin veil of mist. The sky was very clear above it. Only a few fleecy clouds rested above the horizon. But suddenly, as I watched one day, a new cloud appeared like a great ball of snow, which unfolded and spread out in curly feathers, and then, after a few moments, disappeared. It was the bursting of a great shell, and the report of it came with a crash of thunder which seemed to shake the hills. Two, three, four shells burst together like bubbles, and then there followed long,

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

low rolls of thunderous sound like great drums beating a tattoo. The noise had a peculiar rhythm, like the Morse code, with long stroke and short, signaling death. It was made by the Bulgarian batteries on the hill forts, and it was answered by the Turkish batteries from neighboring hills. Presently, as the wreaths of smoke from the guns faded into the atmosphere, I saw that tall, straight columns of smoke were rising from the city of Adrianople and did not die down. They rose steadily and spread out at the top, and flung great wisps of black murkiness across the sky. It was the smoke of buildings set on fire by the shells. Other towers of black smoke rose from valleys which dipped between hills. The Turkish shells, far-flung from their fortifications, crashed into little villages once under Turkish rule and now abandoned by all inhabitants. Soon there would be nothing left of them but blackened stumps and heaps of ash.

As I stood watching one day I saw two scenes in this grim drama which made my pulses beat with a great excitement. A great bird flew across the sky towards the city, and as it flew it sang a droning song like the buzzing of an enormous bee. It was a monoplane, flown by a Bulgarian aviator, who had volunteered to reconnoiter the Turkish defenses. It disappeared swiftly into the smoke-wrack, and for some time I listened intently to a furious fusillade which seemed to meet this winged spy. After half an hour the aéroplane came back, flying swiftly away from the shot and shell which pursued it from the low-lying hills. Its wings were pierced, so that one could see the sky through them, but it flew steadily from the chase of death, and I heard its rhythmic heart-

THE SIEGE OF ADRIANOPLJE

beat overhead. Its escape was certain now. It had mocked at the pursuit of the shells, and the loud beat of its engine above me was a song of triumph. I watched it disappear again — to safety. So it seemed; but death has many ways of capture, and when I came back to Mustafa Pasha that day I heard that the unfortunate aviator, after his escape from the guns, had fallen from a great height within sight of home, and that the hero's body lay smashed to pieces in the wreckage of his machine.

Then on another day I saw another drama in the air. While my eyes watched the smoke-clouds from the siege-guns something twinkled and glittered to the left of the four tall minarets of the great mosque of Adrianople. It was the smooth silk of an airship which caught the rays of the sun; this cigar-shaped craft rose slowly and steadily to a fair height, though I think it was tethered at one end. It rose above peaceful ground into a great tranquillity, which lasted about ten minutes. Then suddenly there was a terrific clap of thunder and a shell burst to the left of the airship. I gave a great cry. It seemed to me that the frail craft had burst and disappeared into nothingness. But a few seconds later, when the smoke was wafted away, I saw the airship still poised steadily above the earth, untouched by that death machine. A second shell was flung skywards, far to the right; and for an hour I watched shells rise continually round that airship, trying to tear it down from its high observation, but never striking it. I do not know the names of the men who piloted that ship, but, whoever they were, they may boast of a courage which kept them at their post in the sky amid that storm of shells.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

It was at night that the bombardment of Adrianople reached the heights of a most infernal beauty. Then the sky quivered with flashes of light, and tongues of flame leaped out from the hillsides, and fire-balls danced between the stars. As I lay in bed after a day on the hills the noise of the bombardment chased sleep away, and every great gun shook the old Turkish farmhouse in which I lived as though heavy iron bedsteads were being dumped down upon the roof. Then there came a continued roll of great artillery. It was so loud and seemed so close that for a moment the wild idea came to me that the Turks had smashed their way out of the besieged city and that there was fighting in Mustafa Pasha. I rose and dressed hastily, lighted a lantern, and went out into the darkness. All around me was the barking and howling of dogs, hundreds of them, baying back an answer to the guns. I stumbled through quagmires of mud and pools of water until I came to the bridge of Mustafa overlooking the wide sweep of the Maritza.

I passed on through the village, and past many lines of sentries and men encamped round fires outside the mosques. Then in the shadow of a doorway I stood still and watched the sky, upon which was written the signs of death still seeking victims, and destruction away in the city below the hills. There was no moon, but the sky was thickly strewn with stars, and it seemed as though some flight of fallen angels were raging in the heavens. I saw a great shell burst below Orion's belt, and the pointers of the Great Bear were cut across by a sword of flame. The Milky Way throbbed with intermittent flashes like sheet lightning, and the pathway of the stars was illumined by the ruddy glare of burning houses and smoul-

THE SIEGE OF ADRIANOPLJE

dering villages. I had an irresistible desire to get closer to all this hellish beauty, to walk far across the hills to a place of vantage from which I had seen the bombardment by day. But when I raised my lantern and walked forward I was arrested by a Bulgarian officer—and this was the end of my night's vigil.

As all the world knows now, the city of Adrianople did not fall before the armistice arranged between the allies and Turkey; and its garrison, which had maintained such an heroic defense, deserved the fullest honors.

A MEMORABLE RETREAT
FROM THE OFFICIAL REPORT ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF
THE BRITISH ARMY FROM THE BELGIAN BORDER
TOWARD PARIS

[1914]

BY GENERAL SIR JOHN FRENCH
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE BRITISH FORCES

[THE retreat of the British army under Sir John French before the invading Germans will take its place in history as a masterpiece of strategy. Practically unsupported by his French allies, relentlessly pursued by an overwhelming force of Germans who allowed their retreating enemies no rest by day or night, the British general succeeded in bringing off his army virtually intact. The comment of Earl Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, on the following report, was that Sir John French had omitted only one aspect of the situation, "the consummate skill and calm courage of the commander himself." *The Editor.*]

ON Sunday, the 23d [of August], reports began to come in to the effect that the enemy was commencing an attack on the Mons line, apparently in some strength, but that the right of the position from Mons was being particularly threatened. The commander of the First Corps had pushed his flank back to some high ground south of Bray, and the Fifth Cavalry evacuated Binche, moving slightly south. The enemy thereupon occupied Binche.

The right of the third division under General Hamilton was at Mons, which formed a somewhat dangerous salient, and I directed the commander of the second

A MEMORABLE RETREAT

corps if threatened seriously to draw back the center behind Mons. This was done before dark. In the mean time about five in the afternoon I received a most unexpected message from General Joffre by telegraph telling me that at least three German corps were moving on my position in front and that a second corps was engaged in a turning movement from the direction of Tournai. He also informed me that the two reserve French divisions and the Fifth French Army Corps on my right were retiring, the Germans having on the previous day gained possession of the passage of the Sambre between Charleroi and Namur.

In view of the possibility of my being driven from the Mons position, I had previously ordered a position in the rear to be reconnoitered. This position rested on the fortress of Maubeuge on the right and extended west to Jenlain, southeast of Valenciennes, on the left. The position was reported difficult to hold because standing crops and buildings made the siting of trenches very difficult and limited the fire in many important localities. It nevertheless afforded a few good artillery positions.

When the news of the retirement of the French and the heavy German force threatening on my front reached me, I endeavored to confirm it by aeroplane reconnaissance, and as a result of this I determined to effect a retirement to the Maubeuge position at daybreak on the 24th.

A certain amount of fighting continued along the whole line throughout the night, and at daybreak on the 24th the Second Division from the neighborhood of Harmignies made a powerful demonstration as if to

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

retake Binche. This was supported by the artillery of both the First and the Second Division while the First Division took up a supporting position in the neighborhood of Peissant. Under cover of this demonstration the Second Corps retired on the line of Dour, Quaruble, and Frameries. The Third Division on the right of the corps suffered considerable loss in this operation from the enemy, who had retaken Mons. The Second Corps halted on this line, where they entrenched themselves, enabling Sir Douglas Haig, with the First Corps, gradually to withdraw to the new position, and he effected this without much further loss, reaching the line from Bavay to Maubeuge about seven in the evening.

Towards midnight the enemy appeared to be directing his principal effort against our left. I had previously ordered General Allenby with the cavalry to act vigorously in advance of my left front and endeavor to take the pressure off. About 7.30 in the morning General Allenby received a message from Sir Charles Fergusson, commanding the Fifth Division, saying he was very hard pressed and in urgent need of support. On receipt of this message General Allenby drew in his cavalry and endeavored to bring direct support to the Fifth Division.

During the course of this operation, General de Lisle of the Second Cavalry Brigade thought he saw a good opportunity to paralyze the further advance of the enemy's infantry by making a mounted attack on his flank. He formed up and advanced for this purpose, but was held up by wire about five hundred yards from his objective and the Ninth Lancers and the Eighteenth Hussars suffered severely in the retirement of the brigade.

A MEMORABLE RETREAT

The Nineteenth Infantry Brigade, which had been guarding the line of communications, was brought by rail to Valenciennes on the 22d and 23d. On the morning of the 24th they were moved out to a position south of Quaruble to support the left flank of the Second Corps. With the assistance of cavalry Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien was enabled to effect his retreat to a new position, although having two corps of the enemy on his front and one threatening his flank. He suffered great loss in doing so.

At nightfall a position was occupied by the Second Corps to the west of Bavay, the First Corps to the right. The right was protected by the fortress of Maubeuge, the left by the Nineteenth Brigade in position between Jenlain and Bray, and cavalry on the outer flank.

The French were still retiring, and I had no support except such as was afforded by the fortresses of Maubeuge, and determined efforts of the enemy to get around my flank assured me that it was his intention to hem me against that place and surround me. I felt that not a moment must be lost in retiring to another position. I had every reason to believe that the enemy's forces were somewhat exhausted, and I knew that they had suffered heavy losses. I hoped, therefore, that his pursuit would not be too vigorous to prevent me effecting my object. The operation, however, was full of danger and difficulty, not only owing to the very superior forces in my front, but also to the exhaustion of the troops.

The retirement was recommenced in the early morning of the 25th to a position in the neighborhood of Le Cateau, and the rear guard were ordered to be clear of

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Maubeuge and Bavay by 5.30 A.M. Two cavalry brigades, with the divisional cavalry of the Second Corps, covered the movement of the Second Corps, and the remainder of the cavalry division, with the Nineteenth Brigade, the whole under command of General Allenby, covered the west flank.

The Fourth Division commenced its detrainment at Le Cateau on Sunday, the 23d, and by the morning of the 25th eleven battalions and a brigade of artillery, with the divisional staff, were available for service. I ordered General Snow to move out to take up a position with his right south of Solesmes, his left resting on the Cambrai—Le Cateau road south of La Chapris. In this position the division rendered great help to the effective retirement of the Second and First Corps to new positions.

Although the troops had been ordered to occupy the Cambrai—Le Cateau—Landrecies position, and ground had, during the 25th, been partially prepared and intrenched, I had grave doubts—owing to information I had received as to the accumulating strength of the enemy against me—as to the wisdom of standing there to fight.

Having regard to the continued retirement of the French on my right, my exposed left flank, the tendency of the enemy's western corps to envelop me and, more than all, the exhausted condition of the troops, I determined to make a great effort to continue the retreat till I could put some substantial obstacle, such as the Somme or the Oise, between my troops and the enemy and afford the former some opportunity for rest and reorganization.

A MEMORABLE RETREAT

Orders were, therefore, sent to the corps commanders to continue their retreat as soon as they possibly could toward the general line of Vermand, Saint-Quentin, and Ribemont, and the cavalry under General Allenby were ordered to cover the retirement. Throughout the 25th and far into the evening the First Corps continued to march on Landrecies, following the road along the eastern border of the forest of Mormal, and arrived at Landrecies about ten o'clock. I had intended that the corps should come farther west so as to fill up the gap between Le Cateau and Landrecies, but the men were exhausted and could not get farther in without a rest.

The enemy, however, would not allow them this rest, and about 9.30 that evening the report was received that the Fourth Guards Brigade in Landrecies was heavily attacked by troops of the Ninth German Army Corps, who were coming through the forest to the north of the town. This brigade fought most gallantly and caused the enemy to suffer a tremendous loss in issuing from the forest into the narrow streets of the town. This loss has been estimated from reliable sources at between seven hundred and one thousand.

At the same time information reached me from Sir Douglas Haig that his First Division was also heavily engaged south and east of Marilles. I sent urgent messages to the commander of two French reserve divisions on my right to come up to the assistance of the First Corps, which they eventually did. Partly owing to this assistance but mainly to the skillful manner in which Sir Douglas Haig extricated his corps from an exceptionally difficult position in the darkness of night, they

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

were able to resume their march towards Wassigny and Guise. By about six in the afternoon, the Second Corps had got into position with their right on Le Cateau and their left in the neighborhood of Caudry, and the line of defense was continued thence by the Fourth Division toward Seranvillers.

During the fighting on the 24th and 25th the cavalry became a good deal scattered, but by early morning on the 26th General Allenby had succeeded in concentrating two brigades to the south of Cambrai. The Fourth Division was placed under the orders of the general officer commanding the Second Army Corps.

On the 24th the French cavalry corps, consisting of three divisions under General Sordet, had been in billets north of Avesnes. On my way back from Bavay, which was my *poste de commandement* during the fighting of the 23d and the 24th, I visited General Sordet and earnestly requested his coöperation and support. He promised to obtain sanction from his army commander to act on my left flank, but said that his horses were too tired to move before the next day. Although he rendered me valuable assistance later on in the course of the retirement, he was unable for the reasons given to afford me any support on the most critical day of all, namely the 26th.

At daybreak it became apparent that the enemy was throwing the bulk of his strength against the left of the position occupied by the Second Corps and the Fourth Division. At this time the guns of four German army corps were in position against them, and Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien reported to me that he judged it impossible to continue his retirement at daybreak, as

A MEMORABLE RETREAT

ordered, in the face of such an attack. I sent him orders to use his utmost endeavors to break off the action and retire at the earliest possible moment, as it was impossible for me to send him support, the First Corps being at the moment incapable of movement.

The French cavalry corps under General Sordet was coming up on our left rear early in the morning, and I sent him an urgent message to do his utmost to come up and support the retirement of my left flank, but owing to the fatigue of his horses he found himself unable to intervene in any way.

There had been no time to intrench the position properly, but the troops showed a magnificent front to the terrible fire which confronted them. The artillery, although outmatched by at least four to one, made a splendid fight and inflicted heavy losses on their opponents.

At length it became apparent that if complete annihilation was to be avoided, retirement must be attempted, and the order was given to commence it about 3.30 in the afternoon. The movement was covered with most devoted intrepidity and determination by the artillery, which had itself suffered heavily, and the fine work done by the cavalry in the further retreat from the position assisted materially the final completion of this most difficult and dangerous operation. Fortunately the enemy had himself suffered too heavily to engage in an energetic pursuit.

I cannot close the brief account of this glorious stand of the British troops without putting on record my deep appreciation of the valuable services rendered by Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien. I say without hesitation that

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

the saving of the left wing of the army under my command on the morning of the 26th could never have been accomplished unless a commander of rare and unusual coolness, intrepidity and determination had been present to personally conduct the operations.

The retreat was continued far into the night of the 26th and through the 27th and the 28th, on which date the troops halted on the line from Noyon, Chauny and La Fère, having then thrown off the weight of the enemy's pursuit.

On the 27th and the 28th I was much indebted to General Sordet and the French cavalry division which he commands for materially assisting my retirement and successfully driving back some of the enemy on Cambrai. General d'Amade also, with the Sixty-first and Sixty-second reserve divisions, moved down from the neighborhood of Arras on the enemy's right flank and took much pressure off the rear of the British forces.

This closed the period covering the heavy fighting which commenced at Mons on Sunday afternoon, August 23, and which really constituted a four days' battle. At this point, therefore, I propose to close the present dispatch.

I deeply deplore the very serious losses which the British forces suffered in this great battle, but they were inevitable in view of the fact that the British army — only a few days after concentration by rail — was called upon to withstand the vigorous attack of five German army corps.

THE SOLDIERS' DREAM.



FIGHTING IN MID-AIR

AN INCIDENT OF 1914

BY SERGEANT WERNER OF THE GERMAN AVIATION CORPS

I HAD received orders to locate the English forces and to determine their exact battle lines and those of their French supports. Accompanied by Lieutenant von Heidsen, who was detailed as expert observer, I went up in my big monoplane and headed directly south in the general direction of Paris, although on this trip we did not go across the city. Previously, on Sunday, we flew across Paris and dropped three bombs. One failed to explode. Another dropped on the roof of a house and set fire to it, and the third fell in a boulevard and made a big hole. But we flew back to our lines that time without being molested and we were so high the rifle fire did not reach us.

On this trip to locate the enemy we flew directly south from Mons, following a broad and plainly marked road. En route we passed over the edge of a magnificent forest, in which more than 40,000 inhabitants of the surrounding country had taken refuge. After flying for more than an hour we passed directly over the English headquarters and I was able to locate the positions of the commander-in-chief and his staff. We accurately mapped this position and then swept across the French position, paying especial attention to the locations of their artillery, much of which was masked in pieces of woods and behind buildings and hedges.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

Lieutenant von Heidsen made rough sketches of everything. I was intently watching the country when suddenly the lieutenant pressed my arm. He pointed upward. At that time we were nearly five thousand feet in the air. I looked in the direction in which he was pointing and there, fully one thousand feet higher than we were, and coming at full speed directly toward us, was a big Bristol biplane.

It was evident from the start that he was far speedier than we were. I tried to climb upward, realizing that when he got over me he would drop a bomb and we would be blown to pieces. But the effort was vain. The Bristol held me for speed. I could not get on a level with him. Soon the Bristol was directly over our heads. My God, man! I was not afraid, but this was a moment of suspense that took years of my life. I was sure the bomb was coming.

The Bristol had reduced her speed until she was keeping pace with us. She was also slowly coming down. Swooping lower and lower, the Bristol came. At last I knew how a bird feels when an eagle or a hawk is swooping down on it. I thought every minute was to be our last. I was certain that what the British were trying to do was to get so close that their bomb could not miss. My nerves were entirely unstrung and it was all that I could do to keep my monoplane on an even keel.

Suddenly I saw a flash alongside of me. For a moment I thought that the expected bomb had struck. Then I realized that the lieutenant was shooting with his automatic pistol. The Englishmen had their propeller in front and so they could not shoot from that position. I was now certain they carried no bombs, as

FIGHTING IN MID-AIR

they veered off some five hundred feet to the side at the same time keeping one hundred and fifty above us.

All this time we were headed northward again toward the German lines. The plunging of the aeroplanes made accurate shooting difficult, although one shot struck my plane. It was very evident that the Englishman was shooting to disable our motor, and we were doing the same thing on our part. The noise of the discharge of the automatics was drowned in the whirr of our propeller.

There was a feeling of utter helplessness so far as we were concerned. Our machine was far slower and much more unwieldy than theirs. I kept figuring on when the next bullet would strike, as with their greater speed they seemed certain finally to get us. While this thought was passing through my mind the lieutenant again touched me and pointed thousands of feet higher.

There, coming at tremendous speed, was a small Blériot monoplane. It looked for all the world like an eagle coming to join the attack. I felt certain now that the end was in sight, as all of the French aviators we have captured up to the present have carried bombs, and the speed of the newcomer — it was far greater than the Bristol — gave him still more of an advantage.

But the Blériot also failed to have bombs and was forced to depend on pistols. Swooping up and down, encircling us and all the time firing at us, the Blériot kept on. Minutes seemed like hours to me. It was certain there could be only one end to this unequal fight, although the lieutenant kept firing in return as calmly as at the rifle range.

Suddenly, however, German troops appeared below

THE BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

us. They began firing at the enemy, and the Blériot and the Bristol, finally exhausting their ammunition, sailed off to the south unharmed. We then landed with our reports, which were especially valuable because of the location of the French artillery. However, I would not want to go through such an experience again.

THE END



The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 09872 410 5

